

CASHEENA PARKER PRESENTS

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who you'll have to deal with in the process.*

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Rage Unleashed

By:

Casheena Parker

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## Introduction Story:

### Nariko's Rage

Lelone grew up in Kyoto Japan. Her birth name was Nariko. She was known as the odd ball, a mixed girl with a Japanese mother and a father who was Japanese and black. She was a rare beauty who was always told that she would make beautiful geisha apprentice. But when her father was murdered in front of her and her mother was forced into a life of servitude that ended with her also being murdered, it unleashed a deadly calm that her pretty face and chilled topaz blue eyes couldn't hide.

So when trying to place her with those that gave the most benefit the contract killers chose Master Hitoshi Hashimoto, a known leader of the Shi Clan, the deadliest of the assassin ninja clans. There, she grew rapidly in her training. Becoming an even deadlier version of herself; constantly using her need for revenge to drive her.

She was a master by the tender age of eight, only four years after she began her teaching. It was then that Master Hitoshi sent her on her first mission to kill another clan leader. Though she was accompanied by more seasoned clan members it was Nariko who completed the mission and brought Hitoshi the head of Ryu, the leader of the Kaminari Clan. Although his blood was splattered across her face, she showed no signs of emotion or remorse that most children her age still held onto.

Over the next two years she developed her skills and became even more deadly. In that time, she was able to obtain the personal information of the men who murdered her beloved father. She learned that it was a hit and those responsible where only paid

henchman, she took it upon herself to make all who were responsible pay.

She started with the hitmen; Johnnie and Jericho, two American born brothers who made a living off killing for high end clients worldwide. They were known to be loyal only to each other. For them it was always about the

money; whoever paid more got the hit. Nariko's father was the low bidder in this game so he was among the first to go, followed by a long list of other highly respected and powerful men and their wives.

She began to watch Johnnie and Jericho's movements, recording their conversations with their supportive wives. Once she heard a conversation between the four regarding her parents with the women voicing their approval of her father's murder and the manner in which they handled her and her mother, she made her move.

She started with the wives; they spoke as if her parent's lives were merely investments into their overindulged lifestyle. She waited until the men went off on another job and the wives, Jessica and Jasmine, were comfortable in their separate wings of the house.

Jessica was first; her bold and unattached attitude sealed her fate. Nariko watched as she prepared her bubble bath and mood music. Waiting patiently while she pranced around, grabbing all she thought she would need afterward; but would never actually get to use. She watched her step into the tub and relax as the water encircled her body; then Nariko made herself known.

She entered the bathroom as silently as a cat stalking its prey, so quiet that Jessica didn't notice her.

"It takes someone really full of themselves to have a mirror where the wall separates the rest of the bathroom, allowing you to sit in the bath water and stare in the mirror to become more full of yourself than you already are." Nariko said calmly, as if she was simply touring the house at two in the morning.

Hearing her soft voice made Jessica jump, this was the first warning that Nariko was even there and though she stood right

behind her, all Jessica could see were Nariko's eyes staring back at her through the mirror.

"W-Who's there?" Jessica stammered, wondering about those piercing blue eyes that seemed to be floating in midair staring back at her.

Nariko didn't answer the question she just continued on in a hushed voice. "Didn't want anything else? You decided to use yourself as entertainment;

well I'm sure you're going to get your monies worth today."

"Who are you? How did you get in here?" Jessica stammered again.

Nariko chuckled harshly. "The question you should be asking is what I'm doing here. But since you don't really want to know I'll answer your questions. I've been in your house all day. I watched you and your sister-in-law prepare dinner for your husbands and go on as if you have done nothing wrong."

"That's because we haven't," Jessica quickly stated.

Nariko continued, "I think that's incorrect. Do you know Naroki or his wife Natashi Matsushita?" "No."

"So why would you assume that your husband made the right choice to kill him and send his wife to a well-known abuser who tortured her for nearly three years until she died as well?"

"I wasn't concerned with her life, just the money we received from the exchange."

"I'm sure you feel the same about their daughter?"

"Yes. We were given a hefty payment for each. Why would I worry about what happened to them? We spared them. My husband could have killed them, at least they got to live. We are not responsible for what happens after they leave our care."

"On the contrary, you are. Everything you do in life has a consequence."

It was with these words that Nariko moved quickly out of the shadows, placing her sharp blade against Jessica's neck as she stared through the mirror into the eyes of the woman she was going

to kill. Nariko watched her eyes widen as she felt the blade sink into her skin.

"Don't struggle. The more you move the deeper it'll go. Don't bother trying to scream or call for help; your phone isn't close and your room is padded for sound. I'm going to give you a chance to look into the eyes of the little girl whose life you didn't consider; whose eyes are the exact replica of her

innocent mother's. I'm going to let you see my mother's eyes before you die and realize that everything has a consequence."

With these words she sliced quickly through Jessica's throat, her blood spraying across the tub and splattering on the mirror before she pushed her into the hot bubbly water. Then she moved onto her next kill; Jasmine. She had placed a surprise in her room that should take affect any minute now.

Nariko wasn't going to use her blade on her because she wasn't as bold as Jessica, she merely nodded her head in quiet agreement at everything Jessica said. So because she was spineless she would die a quiet and painless death.

Like she did with Jessica, Nariko entered Jasmine's room without her even knowing she was there. Before she realized it Nariko was standing over her as she laid in the bed. Feeling eyes on her, she opened her eyes to find Nariko's topaz blue eyes staring back at her. She jumped in shock and immediately cut on the light, seeing the child sitting on her bed.

"Little girl how did you get in here? Do you need help?" "No... You don't recognize me do you?"

"No, should I?"

"No, I guess not. I just thought you would've since you attended my parent's funerals and addressed me at both."

Wiping her eyes to see clearly, Jasmine nodded. "Oh yes. I remember you. It's been a while and you're older. Is that why you're here? Are you in some kind of trouble?"

"Why would it matter? You only care about the money." "Usually, I do. But in your case, I wanted you to have a chance to have a great education, a real chance at life." "That's what you thought you gave me?"

"Yes. I figured it would be better than becoming a geisha, where your body is not your own to command. At least with the Master you would learn to take care of yourself."

Nariko nodded in response before saying, "I appreciate your kindness, which is why I am showing the same for you and your unborn child and allowing you to both die peacefully in your sleep."



As she said these words Jasmine had closed her eyes and taken her last breath. As Nariko left she took a look at the glass of water she placed the untraceable poison in that assisted her well. Then she went downstairs to wait for the brothers to return to find their wives dead.

Nariko patiently waited downstairs in the shadows for about two hours until Johnnie and Jericho returned. When they walked in they immediately went to shower and change in the downstairs bathrooms before grabbing celebratory drink and heading upstairs to join their wives.

Jericho found his wife first. Nariko had already secured her position inside the room to watch his reaction. She had walked up the stairs behind them without them ever realizing she was so close.

She sat in the shadows of the bedroom as Jericho walked into the bathroom searching for his narcissistic wife, only to find her dead body in their Jacuzzi tub. As he leaned over the tub to grab his wife out the water Nariko made herself known.

“Doesn’t feel good when it’s someone you love does it?” Jericho’s head popped up immediately searching for the unknown voice and seeing nothing and no one.

“Who are you? How did you get in here? Did you do this to my wife?”

Nariko chuckled harshly. “Do you really want to know?” Confused and now feeling his anger grow at the sound of her chuckle, Jericho yelled, “Show yourself! Since you’re bold enough to come in here and then stick around to watch my reaction.”

Nariko stepped silently out of the shadows, showing Jericho that she had been standing in the dark doorway the entire time; allowing him to meet the topaz blue gaze of the one responsible.

“What! You’re nothing but a little girl. Do you know what you’ve gotten yourself into? Tell me who you’re spying for.”

“Spying... Spying? I’m here on behalf of my parents, Naroki and Natashi Matsushita. Do you remember them? You killed my father in front of me, spattering his blood on my face before you sold my mother to a monster who tortured her for years before cutting her throat. Now here we are with

your wife's death imitating both of my losses." She smiled harshly. "How ironic, that the wife of the man who killed my parents for the pleasure of money got murdered for the pleasure of revenge."

In response to what she said Jericho stood to his feet with his hands clenched in tight fists. "I remember you. I remember your eyes as they widened while I sliced through all your father's major arteries, making him bleed out. I was there when your mother's throat was cut because of her disrespect to my presence. I watched the life drain from those pretty blue eyes and now I get the pleasure of seeing the life drain from their only daughter. My sister-in-law attempted to spare you. You should have taken that chance because you won't get another. You killed my wife and kind of did me a favor. I now don't need to figure out how to get rid of her after she wasted my money and cheated openly as if I would never find out. So I owe you. I'll repay you by making your death quick. Any last words?"

"Yeah. Say hello to your wife when you get to HELL."

Jericho charged at Nariko and before he realized it her sword's blade had crossed through his body completely separating his lower half from the upper half. She watched his eyes widen as he looked down in shock before he fell to the floor.

She walked silently to the next room to finish the job. She found Johnnie lying next to his dead wife trying desperately to wake her.

"She's dead; has been for the last few hours." "NO! She can't be. She's just sleeping."

"No. She's dead. But be assured she died peacefully. She was a good woman surrounded by the wrong people."

Turning on the side lamp he saw nothing. "Show yourself Nariko."

She stepped forward out of the shadows boldly. "How did you know it was me?"

"There is no one else that has leverage here. You are the only one my wife actually spoke for. It couldn't have been anyone else. I knew your parents well. It was a hard job for me."

"I know. That's why you left it to your brother."

He nodded his head, feeling his throat get dry. He reached to grab his water and take a large drink, not tasting the poison that would help him join his wife; the same poison placed in his wife's glass. Because of their hearts they would die at peace.

The maid found the bodies the next morning. Nariko had returned to her master to find him furious with her for going rogue. When she didn't apologize he realized he couldn't control her and tried to kill her as she sat bowed humbly at his feet. As he went to plunge his sword into her back attempting to use her position at his feet as a weakness. She moved quickly out of the way making his sword stick in the bamboo floors one second too long, allowing her the leverage to slice easily through his body. In his last few seconds of life he learned a lesson from his student; never attack a beast untamed.

She walked to a local adoption agency still covered in the blood from her kills. She was placed in therapy and was adopted into a black American family who when her other talents began to show themselves. Her last statement to her therapist was also the first thing she said to her new parents when they asked her about her history. "I did what I did to protect myself and avenge my dead parents. I am not dangerous to those I love but those that cross them will face my wrath."

## Chapter 1

### Pain

Pain is what awakened Lelone French from her sleep at four in the morning. It was accompanied by her heart racing and sweat covering her brow. It wasn't just the nightmare that had her feeling this way but the pounding and stabbing pains in her head, back and stomach; and the sound of the loud ringer from the telephone sitting on her nightstand. Before she picked up the phone she knew who it was and knew what was wrong.

The panic in her mother's voice came through loud and clear and without allowing her mother to fully explain the emergency she told her, "Mommy try to calm down, I'm on my way. I'll be there in a few hours."

Tami, her mother, didn't think to ask her how. In her mind there was only a few ways that Lee Lee would be able to make it to her side in just a few hours and that was by plane or train. So she would simply await the call for Lee Lee to be picked up from the airport or the train station, but it would never come. Because the moment Lelone got off the phone with her mother she grabbed her large overnight bag and stuffed about two weeks' worth of clothes and necessities inside. After grabbing her purse and another large black leather bag she headed to her truck, so she could make the drive to her mother's side in Sierra Vista Arizona.

She didn't even bother to check her phone for flight or train schedules. She knew driving there was supposed to take her a little over five hours, but she would need her car and she didn't want to get stopped or delayed. She had

made up her mind to be at her mother's side in exactly three hours and nothing on this earth would stop her from being there in that time frame. She pitied those that may have a problem with how she would accomplish that goal. Because if her dream was as correct, as it usually was, she was in no way someone that they would be willing to deal with.

Pulling out of her driveway quickly, she burned tire tracks in the street as she took off. The only stop she made was at the nearest gas station that paired as a restaurant and small quickie shop to fill up. She was in no mood for food and in no need for coffee or caffeine due to the high volume of adrenaline running through her veins.

She stepped out of the truck; her slender athletic build covered in form fitting blue jeans and t-shirt, with a matching hoodie jacket and black high heeled boots and captured all the eyes that were currently present in her area. There was no way people wouldn't notice the petite exotic beauty with her almond shaped pale blue eyes and jet black hair. Those two things alone made her stand out. People always wondered about her exotic eyes and overall look, but as always she was in no mood to try and be polite to anyone looking to ask dumb questions, throw out weak pick-up lines, or ignorant assumptions. She was on a mission and today she was not the one to fuck with.

She entered the gas station and walked directly to the counter to pay for her gas only to be intercepted by a tall burly man who had the look of a body builder, truck driver or biker or maybe all three rolled into one. He also didn't look like he was in the business of being polite or respectful to women and the words that flew out of his mouth only verified that.

“Hey there you hot thang you. Why don’t you do me a favor and drop down on your knees so I can let go of this load I’ve been holding onto just for you.”

His friend standing behind him followed his rude comment by saying, “Hey Fred with something as pretty as that you might want to do more than just drop a load in her throat. That there is prime pickings. She looks like she good and tight too. Way tighter than that last one we had whatcha think. Go ahead and loosen her up and pass her on over so I can get my turn.”

Fred looked over his shoulder and chuckled. “Sure thing Petey boy. But you may have to give me a nice little minute with this one here.”

Lelone didn’t wait for him to turn back around to face her nor did she respond to his brash comments as she attempted to make her way around him. As Fred turned around he noticed her trying to pass him and made the worse mistake of his life. He reached out his hand and grabbed her shoulder. In the flash of a second two things happened. One, Lelone saw a very descriptive scene of just what he and his hillbilly friend Pete did to their last victim. That they drugged at the bar, then took turns on her and when they were done, threw her to their other buddies for fun. And two, she broke his arm in three places, without even breaking a sweat or messing up her hair. Then she continued to the counter to pay the young shocked clerk who like most the men in the room no longer had lust in his eyes.



Fred lay crumpled on the floor screaming in agony. On her way out she stepped over him, as if nothing happened and walked to her car to pump her gas undisturbed. She got in placed her sunglasses on and sped off, leaving a trail of dust behind her.

About ten miles down the road an officer and cousin of Fred pulled Lelone over. He had heard about what happened to him when he went to respond to the emergency call from the gas station that was accompanied by Pete's call to his cell phone about his cousin. So when pulling her over it was not just because she was going 80 in a 50 mph zone. He wanted to lay his eyes on the one who they said broke his cousins' arm and when he got ahold of her he planned to do more than give her a speeding ticket. He was going to finish what his cousin started.

Before walking slowly up to the truck Officer Tucker turned off his radio and made sure his patrol camera was turned off. He wanted to make certain there would be no one to witness what he was going to do to her.

As he walked up to the car she watched him through her rearview mirror and she could easily see the resemblance to the jerk who tried to grab her at the gas station. Shaking her head, she grabbed onto her purse to grab just what he would need.

After approaching the car Officer Tucker tapped his black baton on the glass while telling her to roll down her window, she obliged him while slowly removing her glasses. Then he made the mistake he would regret by telling her to get out of the car.

She slowly turned her head to face him completely. “Don’t you think that’s a bit much for speeding ticket officer?” miss.”

Opening the car door quickly he replied, “Just get out the car

Once she stepped completely out of the truck he turned her around and pushed her face into it while leaning into her and groping her roughly. “Next time you’ll be more careful about whose arm you break. And take it like everyone else has.”

As he was leaning against her boldly feeling her up on the side of the road, she caught a glimpse of all the other times he’d used his badge to harm unsuspecting women and travelers. She cleared her head to block out the visions and began to picture all that she would teach him, and it brought a hint of excitement to her in that moment. Though he would never know; because the only hint of a smile showed in her eyes as she replied, “If you knew who you were dealing with, you would’ve never stopped me in the first place. And you certainly wouldn’t have tried to do something other than your job. I guess like your ignorant cousin I’m going to have to teach you the hard way.”

And before he knew what was happening or could respond she had lifted her foot up and in a sharp quick movement jabbed the blade strategically planted in her boot into his groin.

In a few seconds he was on the ground completely unconscious and bleeding to death. She looked around quickly before she hopped back into her truck and drove away without even looking back to see if he’d regained

consciousness. She felt no regret for her actions. In her mind there was no room to feel anything for someone like that. Because people like him lacked a soul and to pay for all that he had done to the women he was supposed to protect he lay in the road bleeding to death with only pieces of his manhood left.

She drove on for the rest of the distance without any interruptions or problems and she made it to her mother's side of the hospital bed in exactly three hours as planned.

## Chapter 2

### Reveal of Truth

Lelone watched her mother crying with her head bowed in prayer. She was sitting in the hospital room next to Lelone's older brother Lucian's unconscious body that lay broken and beat to a nearly unrecognizable pulp. Lelone said nothing. She just let the thoughts run wildly through her mind. Whoever did this will pay with their life.

"Lee Lee can you hear me?"

"Huh, oh yes Mama. I was just in deep thought that's all. How is he?"

"He's doing okay considering it could have been worse. He is unconscious at the moment and has suffered a concussion. He has four broken ribs and a broken arm and leg. But at least he'll live. I can't imagine how Lela is holding up, LJ was all she had."

Confused she just stared into her mother's solemn face. "Mama what does LJ have to do with what happened?"

Tami looked into her daughter's clueless face and realized she really didn't know. Then she remembered that Lee Lee had gotten off the phone before she had a chance to really tell her all that had happened. "Honey, this may

be hard for you to take but LJ is dead. They shot him in his chest and head, killing him instantly.”

Hearing the words coming from her mother’s mouth seemed unreal. She couldn’t believe that LJ of all people was gone. He was like another brother to her. She had just spoken with him three days ago and they were laughing and joking about how his life was going to be different now that he was a parent of twins. She told him that she would see him this weekend and he told her that she’d better make her way there soon to see her Godchildren. That was the best news she’d had all week. That he was not only engaged and doing great in the business that he started but that he was a father and thought of her enough to make her the Godmother. All that joy and now this.

She would never get to see the look on his face as he struggled to figure out how to manage two small children. That laughter in his eyes replaced with the look of death and defeat as he fought for his life; not just for himself but for the people that needed him. That would need him to be there to protect them and now he was gone. Gone way too soon.

She didn’t have to say anything. Her mother knew what she was thinking. She could read her which was both a blessing and a curse. This was the time she didn’t want her mother to know what she was thinking. This was the time she needed to be able to hide it from her. She sat there, eyes darkening, not a single tear on her face. Now wasn’t the time to mourn. Now was the time for revenge and she would get it. She would make sure that before she buried her best friend, the family of one the ones responsible would be planning a funeral as well. Tami knew her daughter’s agony but she also knew that she needed to know what happened.

“Honey are you okay? I know hearing this is hard for you.” “Yea, it’s real hard. But the hardest part is that I saw it as it was happening and could do nothing to stop it or protect them.

That’s the hardest part of all. I wonder how Luke is taking this news. Wait before we go into all that. Tell me. Tell me what they told you happened.”

After listening to her mother give her the details of what happened to Lucian and LJ, Lelone walked to the hospital’s morgue where LJ’s body was waiting to be claimed by a close friend or family member. He was marked as a John Doe because he was brought in with no kind of identification, which didn’t make any sense if he was driving when the police pulled him over. LJ never went anywhere without his wallet. He liked having his own money with him.

Lelone knew that with all that was going on inside her mother’s head she wouldn’t wonder why LJ’s parents, Lucas and Lela, weren’t present at the hospital. Looking down at his cold corpse she knew that those responsible had stopped at nothing to get away with what they had done to Lucian and LJ, including taking LJ’s I.D and dumping her brother into the nearest creek. She wondered how their faces looked when they realized they had made the mistake of killing an innocent man, who was also well connected in ways they would have to deal with later. She wondered how the Police Chief would handle knowing that his dirty cops were responsible for the death of his lead detective’s only son.

Lelone knew her gift would allow her good friend to tell her what happened in the last moments of his short lived life. So she took a deep breath and placed her hand on the top of his head. All at once the vision hit her,



overtaking her completely and placing her with LJ and Lucian as if she had been present through the entire ordeal.

She watched as he sat holding his twins while watching the game with Lucian; when his wife Della grabbed them from him while saying jokingly, “Give me the babies. I’m sure Lucian didn’t come all this way to sit and watch you coddle your children all day. Shoo!

Get out the house for a few hours and enjoy the game somewhere else. I have to finish preparation for Friday’s dinner and I don’t want you greedy goblins in here eating up all my work. You guys would only make my job harder.”

Laughing, LJ replied, “Oh, so now you’re kicking us out huh? Come on Lucian. I don’t think we’re welcome here any longer. Don’t get too excited though little lady we will return shortly. You won’t be able to get rid of us for long. After all, we have to help you taste test everything. It wouldn’t be fair to leave you to do all the work alone.”

Her response was a hit on his butt, a kiss on his lips, and three loving words. “I love you.”

“I love you too. But all jokes aside we won’t be gone long. We’re going to go to the Champs not too far away to grab some food, watch the game and play a few rounds of pool. Be back shortly.”

Getting into the car Lucian turned to LJ and said jokingly, “Man. You know Della just wanted us out the way. She was more than happy to kick you out and do all the work alone. You’d think she didn’t want to share the food. I mean she was talking like she wasn’t going to be tasting the food herself while she’s cooking. I think she’s just being a little selfish if you ask me. But hey you wifed her, I guess you like the ‘starve your man and his best friend’ types.”

LJ joined in laughing and responded, “You know what? You’re right. We weren’t bothering her. She just wanted the TV and those sneak tests all to herself. I mean, that’s messed up. I know she’s excited about being able to eat what she wants now that the twins aren’t running her appetite, but the way she’s going about this is all wrong. There is nothing wrong with sharing. I mean when we got engaged we said we would share everything. And I think that included those mid-meal taste tests.”

“Yeah man you would think so. If I were you I would march in that house and teach her a lesson. She has to uphold her end of the deal. Then she spanked you and stole your kiss on the way out, that’s just wrong.”

“Yeah you know what? When I get back, I’m going to give her a good talking to. She’s going to know not to cross the King of the castle like that. She can’t be stealing kisses and spanking me. Especially when I didn’t do nothing wrong. That’s just plain disrespectful.”

Laughing, they pull out of the neighborhood and headed to Champs Bar and Grill that was only a short distance away. They were stopped just as they passed the local trail and camping park. Confused about what was wrong LJ pulled over anyway.

As he rolled down his window, the two officers said, “Turn off the ignition and get out of the car.”

“Is there a problem Officers?” LJ asked as he stepped out the

“Yea,” Officer McFalley said. “You’re driving a car that fits the description of an assault that just happened and on top of that you are driving a better car than me. How you get that car boy? What you do? Sell rocks?” He glanced over at his partner before he continued. “Officer McKinney pull his little friend out the car and check the car for drugs.”

After being tossed to the ground LJ said, “Officer there must be some mistake. I think you have me confused with someone else. Let me take out my ID so you can see for yourself. I live not too far from here and I’ve done nothing wrong.” LJ reached into his pocket for his wallet.

“Did I ask to see your wallet? Are you trying to argue with me?” Looking over to his partner he said, “I think he’s trying to sass me; what you think?”

Officer McKinney yanked Lucian out of the car and threw him onto the ground. “Sounds like it to me. I think we should teach these boys a lesson.”

Lucian spoke up for the first time. “Man this is harassment. We’ve done nothing wrong and you know it. Why’d you pull us over? We know and always follow the rules his father is—”

Before he could finish his sentence he’s struck in the head with the officer’s club repeatedly until he lay unconscious.

LJ was yanked to his feet to watch while being held in handcuffs. Snatching away, he started toward the other officer while yelling, “Please stop. You don’t have to do that. We are not resisting anything and we aren’t lying about who we are! Please let me show you proof that we’re not lying.”

He reached for his back pocket to again attempt to take out his license, but he never got the chance to even open his wallet. He was shot four times and dropped lifeless face first onto the ground dropping his wallet open onto the ground next to him.

Shaking, Lelone removed her hand from LJ and headed back to her brother’s side to get the rest of the story.

Stepping into the room, Lelone noticed that her mom’s coat was there but she was nowhere to be found. She assumed she went down to the cafeteria to try to grab something to eat. This would allow her the privacy to do what

she had to do without her. She didn't want her mother to know the details. She could handle it, but she didn't think her mother would be able to.

Taking a deep breath, she placed her hand on her brother's head. She saw everything she'd seen in the visions she got from LJ only from Lucian's point of view. She saw from her brother's images that LJ was showing no threat and was a few feet away.

After regaining consciousness Lucian watched LJ step toward him and stop a few feet away while saying. "Stop! Wait! Here we're not lying let me show you what he was going to tell you—"

Lucian watched both cops pull out their guns and heard four shots ring out. He reached out towards he best friend falling lifeless to the ground, dropping his wallet beside him.

Officer McFalley stood over LJ's lifeless body laughing. "I guess we taught him a lesson. Next time he'll just do what he's told. I guess it's time to deal with the other one then get rid of the car."

Officer McKinney walked over to LJ's body and picked up his wallet and took a hard look and immediately went pale. "Hey McFalley. You may want to take a look at this. This boy's name is Farmouth, just like the new Lead Detective."

“What does that mean? This boy here is clearly black and our detective is white. There’s no relation between the two don’t worry about that. We’ll handle this as if he didn’t carry any ID and gave us problems if someone asks about what happened; that’s if they find out about it. I plan to make sure that this stays between you and me. Now let’s take care of the other one.”

Hearing these words Lucian struggled to stand to his feet. He didn’t want to die like his friend. One of them had to survive to take care of his baby girls. With all the strength he had left he stood to his feet and took off toward the woods.

From behind him he heard, “Where do you think you’re going?” Then the shots went off. He felt the pain rip through his shoulder. Then nothing. He blacked out from the pain. Only to awaken from the shock of the cold water. It hit him like a ton of knives. Then it was filling his nose and mouth and he was feeling himself go again. His last thought was; God don’t let me die this way. Then darkness, darkness filled with voices he couldn’t place filled with panic and fear, worry and wonder. Then more darkness and the sound of his mother’s voice, but he couldn’t wake up. No matter what he tried he couldn’t wake up to tell her not to cry and let her know that he could hear her and that her prayers were already answered.



## Chapter 3

### Breaking the News

Lelone pulls her hand away shaking and was immediately pulled into a seat by her mother who had come back from the cafeteria and stood behind her until she finished. She had gotten used to seeing that look on her daughter's face long time ago.

Lelone sat in the seat next to her brother's bed and did a quick scan over his body and noticed the patch on his left shoulder; then she pulled the cover further back and noticed the patch on his left side.

Watching Lelone do her look over on her brother, Tami ached to know what she had seen in her vision and though she knew the answer she wanted to ask anyway. "What did you see?"

Lelone looked at her mother, "Mom. Why do you ask me that? Especially in a situation like this. You don't need to know all the details about what happened and I don't want to tell you. All you need to know is they won't get away with it."

Tami nodded her head. "I understand. But from the look on your face there's more than what I was told."

Frowning Lelone responded, “Who told you what happened and what did they tell you?”

“He was found by some fisherman. They said they had seen him get tossed off the river bridge. They didn’t see who tossed him.

They pulled him out and notice that he was severely bruised and had a hole in his shoulder. They drove him to the hospital themselves. He wasn’t awake or responding when they brought him in.”

Lelone was only half listening she was too focused on what her plan of revenge would be.

“Lee Lee are you listening to me?” “Huh. Yes Mama.”

“Are you going to tell me what you saw?” “No. You know I won’t do that.”

“Well can you tell me something?”

“Yea. He can hear you and he’s fighting to come back to us.” “You can pick up all that?”

“Yes. It’s part of his thoughts. Did they say why he’s not awake?”

“Not really just that he has a concussion and he has great brain activity so he should be up soon.”

Lelone nodded. “Okay.”

She got up from the chair kissed her mom’s check and asked, “Have you talked to Ms. Lela or Luke?”

“Now that you’ve mentioned it, no. I’ve been so consumed with everything that I hadn’t even called them to see how they’re doing. You know I haven’t seen them either which is odd.”

“Mom, don’t call. I’m going to stop by and have a talk with Luke.”

“Okay. Please give him my condolences.”

“Okay. Mom one more thing; How did you know that LJ was dead?”

“Lucian was with him. When I got here I asked about him and they told me about a John Doe that came in around the same time. I went to view the body and sure enough it was our LJ. They wouldn’t let me sign anything

because I'm not next of kin. They said there were two officers that told them to keep the body as a John Doe until they found next of kin."

Lelone's eyes darkened. Not only did they kill him but they were making his family worry about him while they worked on covering their tracks.

Deep in thought Lelone said nothing as she left the room and headed to her truck and sped off toward the police station. Pulling up she parked and placed her hair in a bun and put her glasses on. She didn't want anyone to pay too close attention to her as she walked in and waited for Lucas. As luck would have it she walked in and walked right into the officers responsible. They looked her up and down while making rude sexual remarks. She held in her rage because she didn't want to get sidetracked from the main reason she was there. Ignoring them she walked up to the front reception and asked for Detective Luke Farmouth. She didn't get his name out completely before he walked off the elevator. He didn't notice her at first because he was talking to another detective. He briefly nodded at the dirty cops, who made no attempt to respond to the gesture but instead gave him a look of disdain. He never noticed while talking to the other detective and looking over some paperwork. Luke didn't notice Lelone until he and the other detective finished their conversation.

"Hey Lelone is that you? What do I owe the pleasure of a long awaited visit from my adopted daughter?"

She didn't smile like she usually did nor did she respond to his question, she just simply said, "We need to talk, privately."

He frowned at her unlikely response and simply said, “O-kay”

She followed him to his office and sat down on his desk. The picture of her, LJ and Lucian caught her eye immediately. Without realizing it completely she said in a tone that was barely above a whisper, “I can’t believe he’s gone.”

She didn’t know she said it until she heard his response. “What are you talking about? Who’s gone?”

She looked up from the picture finally and said, “The information I’m going to tell you isn’t going to be easy for you to hear nor is it going to be easy for me to say. I just left the hospital.”

Cutting her off, he immediately asked, “Why? What’s going on? Who’s in the hospital?”

While responding he began to check his phone to see if there was a missed call. “Tami nor Lela called me. Is there something going on with you?”

“No, well other than the pain of a loss.” Confusion crept into Luke’s face.

“Lucian is in the hospital. He had been found shot, beaten up and floating in the creek. He’s currently in a coma.”

“How? What happened? Lucian never does anything to anyone. I didn’t hear anything about this case or I would’ve dealt with it myself. I wonder why Tami didn’t call me to let me know. Maybe she couldn’t from the hospital. How did you find out?”

“Mama called me when she got the call, before she got to the hospital. But she wasn’t expecting the other half of the news she received when she got there.”

“What do you mean? Wait, when did all this happened? Last I spoke with LJ he said Lucian was supposed to be hanging out with him.”

“Well yea. That’s the other part. Mom didn’t find out until recently that Lucian wasn’t the worst of it. She was wondering the same thing and asked about that fact. They told her that no others were found in the creek but there was a John Doe that was brought in by officers around the same time. She went to view the body and it was LJ. She gave them his name and your contact info but the tech told her she was told by police to keep the body unmarked and call no one until they came back with proper ID. They said they wanted to make sure no one messed with their investigation. So she never wrote it down to call you. LJ is currently lying in the Hillside Hospital Morgue. Unfortunately, there’s more...”

## Chapter 4

### Revealed Lies

All he could think about was his only child. The child they were blessed to have in the first place. They had adopted him when he was just two weeks old. They loved him as their own immediately and he gave him more than his last name but his full name. Most people knew his son by face and name but there were a few rookie cops that had only been in the force a year or so, he hadn't fully been acquainted with. As he began to think his rage grew as his mind wandered through all the new hires to make sure he had their names and faces implanted in his mind as he began to search for answers.

Slowly he began to refocus on Lelone who was seated quietly waiting on him to take in what she had already told him. She realized that he tuned her out after she told him about LJ and sat quietly until his eyes refocused on her.

He swayed slightly before finding his way to the desk chair. Then looked up at Lelone hoping he'd heard her wrong and began slowly; "So you're telling me that not only is Lucian, a young boy I look at like another son and watched grow into the man that he is today, is sitting in the hospital fighting for his life, but also that my only son is dead and has been for God knows how long and is laying unclaimed in a hospital morgue."

Not wanting to look directly at him and see the pain in his eyes she looked down at the picture sitting on his desk and simply nodded. She knew it

would be hard for her to tell him and hard for

him to hear but that didn't make it any easier. It was like looking at her own father and telling him that her brother was dead. She wasn't there when her mom got the news about Lucian, but at least her son may live. LJ wouldn't be waking up, he was gone and that was definitely harder to take.

The moment Lelone nodded her head, he broke, immediately he grew pale and the tears began to stream down his face. He sat there rocking slightly saying, "NO, NO, NO, Not my boy." Over and over again.

Lelone got up from the desk and held him until he let it sink in and the questions began to flow as she knew they would. That only took 10 minutes because one thing that Lucas was besides an amazing family man was an amazing detective and he would want to know why he hadn't heard anything. Why the situation wasn't even brought up to him that his son might have been involved in something like that. He would want to know and he wouldn't rest until he did.

Lucas sat back abruptly. "Lee Lee you said the police told the morgue tech not to allow anyone to identify him? Did she tell you their names?"

Lelone shook her head no. "All she said was they didn't recognize them and both of their names started with Mc."



“I’ll deal with that after I go ID my son.”

Grabbing his keys, they headed out of his office and again came face to face with officers McKinney and McFalley who were both standing directly in front of his office. Because he was rushing and his mind was too preoccupied with getting to his son he didn’t notice them. But Lelone did. She took mental note of their names. She would return later and hack into the system to find out all she

needed to know. Them hanging around the office meant they know what they did and who it directly affected which meant they were currently working to cover their tracks. She could tell by the confident looks on their faces that they thought they wouldn’t be caught, and they were partly right, but she had a dose of her own karma that they would taste real soon.

Luke and Lelone sped off, riding separately yet arriving at the hospital at exactly the same time. Without checking in, they walked directly to the morgue area and seeing no one at the counter they went right to LJ’s current resting place. With hands shaking Lucas opened the freezer door and slowly uncovered his son. Pulling the metal slab out completely he looked down into his son’s face and inhaled quickly. He didn’t expect him to look the way he did. LJ’s face looked just as it did the last time he saw him which was only a few days before. The only thing that was missing was the life that was supposed to be flowing through his veins. He continued to look his son over and begun to touch all the bullet wounds that he saw there. He began with the one that was in the middle of his forehead and continued to the one on the left side of his chest. He noticed immediately that those wounds looked like was shot from behind, the other two wounds were

located in the right side of his rib and the middle of his stomach. He noticed that those two looked like entry wounds which means he was shot from the front.

Shaking his head he said, “This was an execution style killing. Whoever killed my son wanted to make sure he was dead.” In a voice that was barely above a whisper. He looked up at Lelone with tears in his eyes and said, “Who would want to kill me son? He never did anything to anyone. He was a good man who was in the process of being a great husband and father. Why would they choose him of all people? It just doesn’t make sense. Why would they kill my boy Lee Lee?”

Then he broke into tears again. Lelone stood there watching him grieve knowing that there was nothing she could really do for

him in that moment. He would grieve for his only son many times after that and she wouldn’t be able to comfort him through his pain. But she could give him one thing, revenge and she would make sure he would get it and it would be the sweetest revenge he’s ever tasted.

That was how Heather the morgue tech found them when she returned from her break. She was used to seeing Luke while he was working on a case, but she didn’t know anything about his personal life because that was the way he wanted it. He never wanted anyone to have the ability to use his family against him.

When she saw him he was always very professional with an amazing poker face, making it impossible to really know what he was thinking. So she was very surprised to walk in to find him standing over the John Doe crying into his hands. Standing next to him was the woman who snuck in earlier that day and viewed the body.

She stepped further into the room and cleared her throat loudly in attempt to announce her presence. Luke shot up abruptly quickly wiping the tears from his face and turned around to face her. Clearing his throat, he said, "Hello Heather. I didn't hear you come in. I came to identify your John Doe."

Walking completely into the room and up to him she replied, "Hello Detective. Don't worry I wasn't standing here long. Were you and the officers able to find his next of kin?"

Shaking his head, he replied, "I don't know what officers you're referring to. But as far as the next of kin goes that would be me. This is my son, Lucas Jr."

Unable to hide the shock on her face her mouth immediately dropped open. "Oh my. I'm so sorry detective for your loss and to have to find out like this is horrible. I'm so sorry."

Lifting his hand, he replied, "Thank you but I'm fine. Is Dr. Ross back from his conference yet?"

“No, he returns tomorrow.”

“That’s fine. Give him my card and let him know I would like to speak with him immediately.”

“I can do better than that Detective. I can give you his personal number so you can reach him. I’m sure something of this magnitude he would want to hear about immediately, he always speaks highly of you and I know he considers you a dear friend.”

“Okay that would be great thank you.” Heather turned to leave the room to go grab something to write down the personal number when he continued, “If it’s not too much to ask I would like to ask you some questions about the officers who brought him in. I was told you can’t recall their full names.” She nodded her head yes. “Can you tell me what you do remember about them?”

“Absolutely. They were both about six feet tall, dark brown hair and brown eyes. They said they were partners and that they worked for the station. They brought him in themselves and said they found him on the side of the road. They had yelled at me for not being available when they needed a transfer which I thought was weird because there weren’t any transfer calls. I would have gotten those myself because I’m the one sitting at the desk and answering the phone. I spoke with Mickey and he thought that was weird as well because he didn’t get anything on his personal line either. For the most part it’s been pretty quiet besides the bodies brought down from

the hospital. I asked the officers if they were sure they called the right hospital and they insulted me and told me that they

were smart enough to know the hospital they called and told me that I needed to make sure and do my damn job. They told me that because they had to touch the body they had contaminated the scene of a crime and would have to explain what happened to the Captain because of my laziness. When I began to ask questions about the body they brought in, they told me that all I needed to know at this moment was that it was a John Doe and they were working to find the perp responsible. They said that the body was a direct link to a case they were working on and didn't want anyone coming in to view or touch it. They said they would be back to have the body removed and sent to their experts for testing and that they didn't want Dr. Ross touching or viewing the body. They told me they would come back personally to give me instructions on what to do next. When I asked for their names to place done on the paperwork they told me not to worry about it and walked out quickly. I tried looking at their badges as they left but they moved too quickly so all I can tell you they began with Mc K something and Mc F something. I'm sorry I can't be more helpful. When I saw you and the young woman I thought I was going to get into trouble for not following orders because she was able to sneak into the morgue earlier while I was dealing with a transfer from upstairs."

Shaking his head he replied, "Don't worry, you're in no trouble. I know you do a great job. Tell me, when was my son was brought in by these officers."

"Around 12 last night, I remember because there was a lot of commotion around that time. There was a guy brought in after being rescued by fishermen. He was tossed into the river not far from where they were fishing."

Luke nodded his head slightly, while taking the card the Heather gave him.

“Is there anything else you need Detective?”

“No, thank you Heather you have been very helpful today. If I have any further questions I’ll come back.”

“Okay, that’s not a problem. I’ll be here until nine tonight and back here again at eight in the morning for the rest of the week.”

“Okay great. Thanks again.”

“You’re welcome and sorry again for your loss.”

He didn’t respond as he walked away from the morgue with Lelone following close behind. Heather began to add the identity information to the file. Hoping she wouldn’t have to deal with the cops when they find out that the body was already identified without their knowledge.

## Chapter 5

### Fears Unleashed

Luke and Lelone left the morgue and went directly to Lucian's room. He wanted to check on him and his dear friend to see how they both were holding up. When they walked into the room, Tami was sound asleep in the chair next to the bed. She awakened as they entered the room completely.

“Oh, hey Luke. I didn't know you were here. I guess Lee Lee told you about what happened huh?”

He nodded without verbally responding while looking down onto the face of his godson. Looking quickly over at Lelone to verify if she'd told him what she knew and getting the answer with a slight nod of her head Tami continued, “Luke have you gone to view LJ?”

“Yeah, I saw him. That was the first place I went when Lee Lee came and told me that they were here.”

Nodding her head as the tears began to flow from her eyes she asked, “Are you okay? How are you holding up? I can only imagine how you must be feeling. I would've called you myself but I couldn't think straight after I got the call and to find that both of my sons were here in the same hospital. One

in a coma on life support and another lying in the morgue. I didn't know how to process that let alone tell someone else about it."

Luke walked over and hugged her gently. "Don't worry. I understand. I'm just now finding out and I can't bring myself to call Lela and tell her the news. I don't know if telling her over the phone would be the right thing to do anyway. This is going to be very hard on her."

Nodding her head in agreement Tami said nothing knowing that there was really nothing that needed to be said. They were all like family. It was Lela and Luke who helped her through the sudden death of her husband James and the adoption process that blessed her with Lelone. They had all been friends for over 30 years. So they knew each other well and took care of one another, with them most of the time words weren't needed.

They released each other and he moved the cover back to look at the damage that was done to Lucian. "What did the doctors say?"

"They say he has great brain activity and that he should be up soon. In addition to him being in a coma he has four broken ribs as well as a broken arm and leg. He also had some internal bleeding from the muscle tear caused by the bullets. Thanks God they didn't hit any organs. That probably would have killed him."

"Okay. Keep me posted. I'm going to go home and tell Lela the news. I'm sure she's going to want to come and sit with you until he's awake so I'll



see you shortly. Lee Lee walk out with me, I want to ask you something.”

They walked out of the room and down to his truck. It was there that he turned to her and she saw the rage in his eyes. He had done so well hiding it up until that very moment.

“Lee Lee. I know you have the gift of vision. And knowing you like I know you I also know that you know more information about what happened. I know you don’t like to share what you see with your mother and godmother, but tell me. I need to know what I’m dealing with. Was this accidental?”

Meeting his gaze of rage with one of her own she responded, “No, it wasn’t.”

“So you’re telling me that someone purposely executed my son and tried to do the same to your brother?”

“That’s exactly what I’m telling you.”

“Do you know exactly what happened? Where you able to see that even though he’s gone and Lu lies in a coma?”

“Yes. I know what happened and I know that it was two of your cops that are responsible, but that is all I will tell you. Just know that it was done on

purpose. It was done unjustly and they thought they would be able to get away with it if they covered their tracks.”

“Lee Lee. I know the pain you’re feeling but help me bring them to justice so that this will not happen again. I don’t want anyone else to have to bury their sons.”

“I can’t help you. But don’t worry Dad, it won’t happen again. They will get what’s coming to them and they will have no warnings to prepare them.”

Looking at the hell in her eyes he knew she was serious. He knew that she would do whatever she could to find out exactly who they were and get revenge. What he didn’t know was what her actual plan was and he also knew she would never tell him. So to catch them he would have to not only do his job but also keep a close watch on her to find out what she knew and use it to catch them before she did.

Shaking his head, he got into his truck and headed home to break the dreaded news to his wife. He knew that this would be hard for her, but the worst part was knowing that the people responsible were still out there with no care in the world about what they did; doing everything in their power to make sure they would never be caught.

He pulled up in the driveway immediately noticing his wife Lela in the front yard tending her garden. She stood as he pulled in, her brow pulling together in a look of confusion at why her husband was home so early. She

shook the dirt from her gloves and removed them while dusting her clothes. She quickly walked to the truck to meet him.

“Hey honey. What are you doing home so early I wish you would have...”

Her voice trailed off as she looked up into her husband’s face. She knew without him having to say anything that something was wrong. In that moment she heard her phone ring and took a double look at her husband before rushing to the phone. Glancing down at her watch she noted the time 9am and immediately wondered who would be calling this early in the morning. Seeing her son’s home number on the caller ID, she automatically knew it was Della, his fiancé. She was still on maternity leave after having her twin grandbabies. She would usually call her daily but never this early so she assumed there was something going on with the twins. She was nowhere near prepared for the panic filled voice on the other end of the phone and the news that voice would tell her.

“Hello. Della is everything okay—”

She was quickly cut off by Della’s panicked voice. “Hey Ma. Is LJ and Lucian there?” They left around seven yesterdays to go to the nearby sports bar to watch the game and play pool. I thought that they would be back when the game was over but they weren’t. Then I assumed they went back to Lucian’s place to hangout for minute

but I've been calling them both for hours and neither one of them is picking up which isn't like either one of them. I'm so worried. I have been calling everyone we know. I called the office thinking that he went to work from Lucian's house but they haven't heard from him. They assumed he was home with me and would be late. I called Lucian's boss and they haven't heard from him either. I'm so worried. I have this terrible feeling that something bad happened. Please tell me that they are there with you and that they're okay."

Frozen with shock, standing by the kitchen counter next to her husband Lela had placed Della on speaker phone so that they would both be able to hear what she needed. She didn't have a response for what she was hearing. Della was right. It wasn't like either one of them to go without answering their phone or calling to let someone know they were okay. LJ especially would've called and let Della know something if he didn't plan on coming home, which would be out of the ordinary. He barely stayed away from for four hours since he learned she was carrying his twins. He was very protective over her and the girls and would want to be near in case they needed him. So hearing all of this was more than odd, it was frightening. Because the only reason they wouldn't have called is if something was wrong.

Breaking out of her trance she heard Della saying, "Ma, Ma are you still there?"

"Yes Della. I'm here. They're not here darling. I haven't heard from either one since early yesterday when they called to check on me on their way to work as they do every morning. I assumed they were running behind and didn't have time to this morning. I didn't want to think the worst. But hearing this, I don't know what to think."

Looking now at her husbands' face she wondered if that was why he was home so quickly after leaving the house not too long

ago and why he now stood there with a look that said he knew his son was missing.

“Luke, do you know anything? Have you heard from the boys?”

Dropping his eyes, he immediately grabbed a chair for his wife. “Honey I think you should sit down. Della honey, I want you to sit down as well and make sure you're not holding the babies.”

Hearing this both women immediately thought the worse. Della was already sitting but the thoughts rushing through her mind made her dizzy because she already knew what was coming next. Lela refused the chair, “Honey, you're scaring me. What is going on? What do you need to tell us that we need to sit down?”

Taking a deep breath he said, “There is no easy way to say this. Lucian and Luke were attacked yesterday. At this very moment, Lucian is laying in the hospital ICU in a coma and LJ is laying in the morgue. I just left there. Lee Lee came and got me told me that they were there.”

Immediately Della began to scream, “NO! NO! There must be some mistake. It’s not him, it has to be someone else. NO! Don’t tell me that.”

Lela’s knees buckled and Luke had to catch her before she hit the floor. “Honey NO! No, not my boy. My only son. No, it can’t be. How could this happen? Why? God no! Please not my son. Not my boy.”

The two women wept together loudly. Unable to control their emotions and the pain they were now feeling. Just yesterday they sat on the phone planning the menu for the family gathering that coming weekend and now they were hearing they would have to begin planning a funeral instead.

Della looked over at the girls who were sleeping silently in their matching swings and wept more. They would never know their father. He would never get to see his girls take their first steps or say their first words. And she would never get to marry the love of her life. She lay on the couch and wept for their loss of the amazing man they had all come to love. She wept for the loss she was feeling and the moments that was stolen from her and her girls.

Luke placed Lela, who was also weeping hysterically, on her couch as well. She thought of all she had gone through to have LJ only to have him abruptly snatched away from her. She wept for her grandchildren who will now have to grow up without a father to protect them. She wept for her memories that would never happen. And then she sat up quickly as her mind begin to wonder what happen to her beloved son, who had no enemies

and did wrong to no one. She heard her future daughter-in-law crying over the phone.

“What happened Luke? What happened to my son? What happened to the boys?”

Luke sat in the love seat quietly listening to the women cry and waiting for them to calm down. He waited for the part of the news that he knew would haunt them the most.

“I don’t fully know what happened to them. All I know is they were shot. LJ died immediately and Lucian was tossed into the river and found by some local fisherman who took him to the hospital. I don’t exactly know what happened or who killed them, but I promise you both that I will. I will get to the bottom of this and the person or persons responsible will pay for this.”

Hearing this news made Della pause. “You mean whoever did this is still out there? You mean that this could happen again? You

mean you can’t tell me if the person who did this did this on accident or planned this? Are we danger?”

“I can tell you this was no accident Della honey. Whoever did this did it on purpose and yes, he or she is still out there. I don’t know how much that person knew about them and I don’t know if you’re in danger. But I will make sure that everyone else is protected and safe.”

Lela held herself as a thought quickly crossed her mind. “Honey you said Lee Lee is here. That means that Tami has to be at the hospital and had to have called her when she got the call about Lucian. I can’t imagine how she’s dealing with all of this. I need to go be with her. I can’t let her go through this alone.”

Nodding in understanding Luke replied, “Yes they’re both there and Tami seems to be holding up okay. She looks exhausted like she hasn’t slept since she heard about it all and I can understand why. I’ll take you up there whenever you’re ready honey. Don’t rush.”

Turning to the phone Lela said, “Della honey are still there?” “Yes.”

“I’m going to go to the hospital. I want you to stay at home. Unless you would rather go with me to view the body.”

“No, no. I can’t see him like that.”

“Okay. I will have Lee Lee come stay with you so you won’t be there alone with the girls. Is that okay with you?”



“Yes that will be fine.”

“Okay. I will call you in a few to check and make sure you’re okay. I love you. Kiss the girls. We will stop by later and make sure you’re okay.”

“Okay.”

That were the only word Della could say before the phone went dead. That was only word that she could bring herself to speak, even though nothing about the current situation was okay. And in her eyes it would never be okay again. Because on this day all of her worst nightmares came true. Not only was the love of her life taken from her. But he was murdered and the person or persons that were responsible were still free. And they had the power to come to her and snatch the little bit of security she had in this moment. They had the power to come to her and take the only family she had left.

## Chapter 6

### Fog of Emotions

Lela slowly got up from the couch and walked to the door with Luke close at her side. Together they got into the truck and made the drive back to Hillside Hospital. They rode in silence as the tears began to slowly fall down her face. All she could think about as she passed all the places that she had once been with her only son was that they would never see each other again and immediately the tears began to flow.

They arrived at the hospital and walked to the morgue first. She wanted to look at her son's face and know that this nightmare that she was facing was real and not just a dream she would one day wake from. Even though she wished it was, she knew in her heart that would never happen.

They walked past the desk and right into the morgue. Heather sat at the desk and didn't bother to stop them, she knew why they were there and that was a moment that she didn't need to make any more difficult than it already would be. She could tell by the look on the woman's face that she was Detective Farmouth's wife and the mother of the deceased. She couldn't imagine what she must be feeling so she would sit there and allow them the closure that they needed.

Slowly Luke and his wife walked to the freezer currently holding their only son and opened the door. As the detective pulled the cold slab out his hands

began to shake slightly. He knew what he was going to see. But that didn't make this any easier for him.

He would have to show his wife something she should never have had to see. He would have to watch her heart break and he would have to console her with nothing but promises that he didn't know that he would be able to keep, because the person responsible was still out there somewhere. He would have to console her while trying to hold himself together.

He pulled the sheet back from his dead son's face and waited for his wife's response. He didn't get the response he thought he would receive. As he uncovered LJ's face Lela stood frozen in place and when his face was fully uncovered she immediately noticed that he was not as he was when she last saw him. She thought back on the few days before when he was sitting at her house with his fiancé and their newborn twin girls. She thought back to the look of pride he held on his face and the warm smile that lit up his eyes while holding his children in his arms. She thought about the warmth that flowed through his face showing more than just emotions but the life that was flowing through his veins, the life that was no longer present as she looked down at her son.

Unconsciously she touched his face as she always did when she saw him. And it was then that she noticed the bullet wound in his head. She touched that wound, carefully tracing around it with her index finger. Then all in one motion she pulled the cover back to fully see him. She wanted to see what these animals had done to her baby boy, her only son, the son that she had fought so long and hard for. The son that she prayed and cried for. Her only son.

She looked down at the wound in his chest where she used to lay her head as they hugged closely. She looked at the wounds in his side and his stomach and she ached for him. All at once she felt the pain that her son must have felt as these monsters ripped him from her life. She felt the pain as if it were her body that they shot so violently. Without even realizing it she was falling. She felt Luke's arms around her but she didn't know how she got there. She

steadied herself and walked from the morgue without saying a word.

Luke took one more look at his son before following his wife. He touched his shoulder while saying aloud, "Don't worry my son. Those that are responsible for this will pay. I can promise you that they will pay."

And with those words said he covered LJ up and pushed his body back into freezer. He rushed to catch up with Lela and found her sitting on the bench by the elevator. She said nothing as she stood up as he approached. He placed his arm around her and pushed the elevator button that would take them to the ICU floor, where she would go to see her godson fighting for his life. He wondered if she would eventually say something. It wasn't like her to not show emotion.

They exited the elevator and walked to Lucian's room. When they walked in Luke noticed nothing had changed, he still lay there completely still, which was the opposite of the young man he knew so well. Ever since he'd known Lucian, he'd been an active, careful boy. In his adulthood those

traits had been carefully preserved as he went through life with ease and confidence. Seeing him laying here with tubes assisting his breathing was no different than seeing his son in the morgue. It was an unbelievable feeling that crept over him. These young men shouldn't be in this situation. They had done everything that they were supposed to do to make sure they were never in this type of situation. They stayed in church and hung out with the right crowd of people. They stayed active in the local youth community and worked hard in their fields of choice. Yet here they both were in the same hospital, one laying lifeless on a metal slab and one laying close to death on a bed only a floor above the man he lovingly called brother.

As they entered the room they noticed that Tami and Lee Lee weren't there. They didn't have to wait long to find out why. Lee Lee

walked in shortly afterward carrying a cup of water and graham crackers with peanut butter. Tami followed, still wiping her hands with the paper towel she used after washing her hands. Seeing Lela they immediately went to her and they all embraced lovingly. To Tami, Lela was like her sister, her best friend for over thirty years. To Lee Lee, Lela was another mother. And she knew that if she was here then she had already been told what happened and had already been down to view LJ. They could tell from the look in her eyes that she was fighting to control her emotions, the same emotions that she usually let flow so freely. This was a situation that none of them were prepared for and none of them knew how they should be feeling or how they should respond. They all had the same thoughts about what had happened and for most of them wondered what really happened and who was responsible; all except for Lelone.

Yes, she wondered why it happened. Yes, she wondered why they had to be placed in this situation. But she wasn't feeling the loss quite yet, she was feeling rage toward the act that caused this. She wasn't wondering who was responsible because she knew and they would soon know just how much rage she felt. But now was not the time. She had waited around knowing that LJ's parents would be there soon to sit with her mother as they always had. Lela was always there when they needed her, as if it were her personal duty to do so. She came and never faltered on anything that they may have needed. And even in this situation it was no different. Here she was holding in her tears so that she could try to be strong for Tami and Lelone in their time of need. Here she was standing with them as her son lay dead just one floor below.

As they hugged each other Luke went and got more chairs from the waiting room so that they all would be able to sit down. Lelone refused because she wouldn't be staying long. She had some research that she needed to do. She had only waited at the hospital long enough to see Lela and let her know that she was there for her

and that she would be there until those revenge was done. She said none of this, of course, but her presence was enough to make that known. Everyone in that room knew that Lelone standing there meant that she wouldn't be going home anytime soon.

Lela and Tami sat side by side next to the bed, holding each other's hand, neither wanted to break contact because they didn't know how much more they would be able to handle separately. They sat there silently for a long while. Both thinking about their situation and all that would have to be done in the next few days, both thinking about the twins and how the whole family was coming into town to celebrate their birth. Both trying to hold

onto hope that Lucian would pull through and they wouldn't have to bury them both.

Luke stood propped against the wall watching the women sit there mirroring the same solemn expression. It hurt his heart to see them like that knowing that he could do nothing to change how they felt. He knew that Della was probably at home with the same expression on her face as she continued to try to be the best mother possible for her twin girls.

The silence was ended by the sound of his phone ringing. It was his partner, Blake, trying to figure out where he was. Luke had told no one of why he'd left the police station so abruptly. There was a case that needed their attention and it wasn't like him to leave without giving a reason. He stepped out to take the call without disturbing everyone else.

Clearing his throat so the emotion he felt wouldn't reveal itself he picked up, "Hello?"

"Hey man what happened to you? I thought I saw you talking to Laws and the next minute you shot out of here without saying anything. Is everything okay? Where are you?"

"Hey Blake. Um sorry about that man um something important came up. I'm sitting here at Hillside Hospital in the ICU."

ICU! What the hell? What happened? Who's in the hospital? You know what never mind I'm on my way. I'll see you in a few."

The line went dead before he could tell him there was no need and that it was okay. Before he could tell him the news that he still hadn't quite processed in his own head.

Blake arrived at the hospital in ten minutes, ten minutes faster than it should have taken him to get there. He raced there trying to match the speed of his own thoughts. What happened? Who's in ICU? What's their condition? Will they make it? He and Luke had been partners for over thirty years ever since he joined the police force. They made Detective at the same time and were placed on both the Crime and the SVU divisions. He looked at Luke's family as he would his own. So hearing that someone was in ICU hit him just as hard as it would if it were someone in his own family.

When Blake entered the hospital he didn't even bother to take the elevator. Instead he took the stairs to the ICU floor two at a time. He didn't want to waste any time trying to get there, especially when he was already late to begin with. When he walked through the doors of the ICU he immediately noticed them in the room. He saw Luke and Lee Lee first. He knew that if Lee Lee was there then whatever had happened wasn't good. As he got closer he saw Lela and Tami sitting next to the bed. It wasn't until he got to the door that he saw who was lying in it; Lucian. The sight rocked him to the core. Lucian wasn't the type to do anything that would make someone want to harm him, so seeing it without hearing about it first was odd to him. He greeted the women first with hugs and then pulled Luke out to walk with him and get some understanding of what happened.



“Luke, man, what happened? How the hell didn’t we know about this?”

Luke looked at his partner understanding all of his emotions but unable to find the words to tell him it was much worse than he thought. “I don’t know and that’s what bothers me. Lee Lee came to visit me and told me that he was here. Tami had called her to let her know that Lucian was here. Apparently he was brought here by some local fisherman that saw him being thrown into the river where they were fishing.”

“What the hell? Did they see who did it?” “No.”

“What did the doctor say?”

“Well, he has great brain activity so they think he should wake up soon which is a good thing. He has four broken ribs as well as a broken arm and leg. But the odds are good so far.”

“Oh okay. Well that’s good news at least. But I still don’t see why someone wasn’t called down here to find out what happened. It’s hospital protocol in a situation like this.”

Luke said nothing. He only nodded his head in agreement because his partner was right. Usually in cases like this the hospital would have called, except in this particular situation there were officers who were already there

who probably spoke with them about it and said nothing. This made him even more curious about the cops that brought his son in but never made a statement about it.

Looking at Luke's face, Blake could tell his mind was working a mile a minute. He wondered what else was going on that he

wasn't aware of. From the look on his partner's face there was something much worse that occurred than someone nearly killing Lucian and for some reason he couldn't form the words to tell him, which was unlike his usually blunt partner.

"Um, Luke. Man what else is going on? I can tell from the look on your face that there's more than what you're telling me."

Detective Farmouth didn't respond, because he couldn't. He just pushed the button to the elevator so he could show him instead. They took the walk to the morgue, while Blake wore a look of confusion and concern. As Luke entered the morgue for the third time that day he said nothing. Heather already knew what he was there for and she could tell in the way he was walking that he couldn't bare to open the freezer again to see his son laying there. So she walked ahead of them quietly leading the way with Blake following behind her and Luke in the rear.

She stopped at the freezer and slowly opened it as Blake stood confused and Lucas stood a few steps behind him. Blake watched Heather open the

drawer and remove the cover. It was then that the look on his partner's face made complete sense. It was far worse than he could have imagined. Not only was his godson Lucian, laying in the ICU fighting for his life but his only son was laying on a cold slab in a morgue.

He couldn't bring himself to try to understand what he was seeing. He glanced at the wounds there on his exposed body and instantly grew angry. What had happened to these young men? He turned around to find his partner standing there shaking his head while fighting to hold back his tears. Blake said nothing as he walked to his partner and embraced him. He could only imagine what he was feeling. This was not something that he could easily hold in and ignore. This was his son, his only son. This was the son that was considered a blessing to him and his wife after four

miscarriages and three failed rounds of IVF. This was the son that they were denied the first time around when they tried to adopt. This was the son that he was proud enough to not only adopt but give him his name.

"Heather? How did he get here? Who brought him in? I heard nothing about this at the station?"

"Like I told Detective Farmouth earlier, two officers that brought him in. I don't remember their names except for the fact that they both began with 'Mc.' That's all I can really remember. They told me that they didn't know who he was and that they didn't want me to allow anyone to identify the body until they gave me the clearance. They said that they also didn't want Dr. Ross to examine him and that they would have the body transferred to one of their people because this body was part of an investigation. They

brought his body in around midnight which was around the same time the guy that was found by the fisherman was brought in. You had to hear about that at least right?”

“No, actually I knew nothing of either case. I also don’t know what case would involve a supposed John Doe.” Blake was silent for a moment, going over the things that Heather had just told him in his head. “Okay thanks Heather. Dr. Ross should be back soon right?”

“Yes, he will be back tomorrow.”

“Okay great. Let him know that we will be taking over this case and that he should only speak directly to me or Detective Farmouth. If anyone else comes in about this victim make sure you call me at this number with their names.” He handed her his card and she took it without hesitation and while nodding in understanding.

Luke and Blake walked out of the morgue and headed directly to Bill, the Head of Security’s office.

When they walked into Bill’s office he could tell immediately that something was wrong. He knew and worked with them often and they very rarely showed emotion, yet here they both were walking into his office both wearing an expression that meant business.

“Hello Detectives. How can I help you today?”

“Hey Bill. We are working on a case and we need to see the surveillance video from late last night if that’s okay with you,” Blake said without hesitation.

Frowning slightly Bill responded, “Okay... sure, that won’t be a problem. Are you looking for a certain camera in particular?”

“Yeah, I need the video from the camera by the morgue starting around twelve last night.”

Detective Farmouth stood staring closely at the screen. Rage began to build in his chest when the video was blown up into full view on Bill’s computer screen. Though he couldn’t see their faces, he could easily recognize the officers from the station. They were the same ones that were standing by his office when he left with Lelone. He didn’t know much about them right now, but he was damn sure going to find out.

## Chapter 7

### Demons Identified

Luke tore out of the security office and headed straight for ICU. He had to let his wife know that he was leaving before he got to work on finding out more about the officers that brought his dead son to the morgue and tried to keep him ever being there a secret.

He skipped the elevator and instead took the stairs. When Lelone saw his face she knew that he had found out more about the cops that brought LJ to the hospital. He walked into the room where Lela and Tami were still sitting how he left them, neither seemed to have moved an inch since.

When they entered the nurse came to check Lucian's vitals noticing nothing had changed with his condition. Once she left the women broke into tears. They released all the tears that they had been holding in and in that moment the words came just as freely.

“My boy is gone. I’m sitting in this hospital with my godson who’s fighting for his life and where my only son is laying in a morgue because someone thought so little of his life that they decided to take him from me, to take him from his family. His daughters will never get to truly know the father they had because someone took him from us.”

Detective Farmouth said nothing. He knew that his wife didn't need him to say anything. That she was trying to find a way to make sense of all that was going on at that very moment. He couldn't say anything to help her through that process not at this

moment, simply because he couldn't understand it any more than she could. Lucas had never been the type of boy that was in any trouble or one to have many enemies. In fact everyone who knew him loved and respected him for the man that he was. They couldn't have had a better son. It was then, while watching these women break into tears from the pain they could no longer hold inside, did his rage begin to show.

"Honey, I'm going back to the office for a few. I'll be back afterward okay. Tami keep me posted if anything changes with his condition."

Both women nodded. As Luke walked out Lelone grabbed his arm and said, "I know what you found out. Let me help you."

He said nothing but nodded in agreement. He would need all the eyes and ears he could get in this situation because he didn't really know what he was up against especially if it was guys who worked in the very same station as he did.

Blake, Luke and Lelone headed out of the hospital and to their separate cars. Then they all sped out of the parking lot heading to the station. When they got there, Blake and Luke went to speak with their Captain about what

they'd learned while Lelone walked in and went straight to Detective Farmouth's office. She wanted to get a head start on her own research while they worked on doing things their way. On her way to his office she bumped into Officer McKinney who seemed to be standing there as if on guard.

He abruptly stopped her and said, "Hey there little lady. I think you're lost the reception area is back the other way."

She pretended to ignore him and kept walking past him. He tried again to get her to stop without touching her or drawing attention to himself because there were other detectives around and

he wasn't supposed to be there either. When she continued to ignore him he tried to grab her arm and make her stop. When he did she quickly moved making him run into the wall then she made a dash to the office to find it occupied by Officer McFalley. Officer McKinney had been detained answering questions from other detectives about what happened. They had heard and seen what happened and wanted to know his reasons behind it.

She walked slowly toward the office while pulling out her phone to record him. She watched him go through Detective Farmouth's desk and his computer all while glancing at the pictures of LJ, Lucian and her on the desk. He was so into what he was doing he never looked up to see her standing there only a short distance away recording him. After Officer McFalley finished snooping through Detective Farmouth's computer he got up and slowly exited the office while looking around to make sure no one



saw him. He was so busy looking for the other detectives he didn't see her standing tucked slightly behind the nearest wall still recording him. She watched him walk quickly out of the detective department while sending the video she recorded to Detective Farmouth. She figured he should know that he was snooping in his office that would give her another reason to be on his computer when he returned. Then she went into the office to find out what he was looking for and to do a little research of her own.

She immediately noticed that he used a professional lock system to break into the office, the door still showed signs of being locked though it stood open and unlocked. She also noticed that he slightly moved all the pictures in the room. As if he took the time to pick up and look at every one. Just by doing that, he already learned way too much about their family. In Luke's office there were pictures of everyone that was closest to him. This included her and her mother as well as Della and the girls at the hospital. Seeing this she knew that she would have to move fast with her plan because if he was trying to cover his tracks than he would be going after the family that would fight to find out the truth of what happened. She wasn't planning on losing anyone else.

With more rage than when she first entered the department she sat down and immediately went through the recent files on the computer. Because McFalley was in a rush and attempting to cover his tracks he didn't clear the history so this part was easy to follow. She found that he had begun to check on everyone in the family; he looked for everything including their current addresses and phone numbers. The alarm of immediate warning went off in her head and she thought of Della, the grieving unsuspecting widow, at home with her baby girls. She picked up the phone and called her, it took a while but she finally answered sounding as if she'd been crying.

“Hello?”

“Hey Della. It’s me Lee Lee. Are you okay?”

“Oh hi Lee. I was just sitting here getting the girls ready to eat before I tried to continue on with the day. I can’t believe all that’s happened. How is Lucian? Is he doing better? Has his condition changed any? I can’t bear for anything else to happen.”

“His condition is actually stable. But there’s been no change. He is still in a coma and the doctors have said nothing in either a good or bad direction.”

“Okay. What room is he in? I would like to go and visit with him after I get the girls settled. I know that your mom and Lela are there still and I really need to be around family right now. Even if it is at the hospital.”

“Okay. He’s in ICU room 7. They should still be there waiting to see what happens. I left to get some things done. But listen, I don’t think you should go up there right now. He’s still unconscious and you have a lot going on with the girls. I will be there to stay with you shortly.”

“Oh okay. Is there something going on? You sound a little weird and with everything going on right now, I’m just a little on edge.”

“Everything is fine. But listen, don’t answer the door for anyone but family, okay? No one not even if the police come to your door to talk with you. Don’t answer the door for anyone. In fact, make it look like you’re not home.”

“Okay. Lelone it’s not like you to ask me to do something like that. What’s going on? I know you know more than what you’re telling me. I’ve known you long enough to know that you have your ways to find out way more than any of us ever could. Talk to me and tell me what’s going on. Don’t leave me in the dark. I have the girls to think about and I don’t want to have to continue to run and look over my shoulder until this person who killed LJ is caught. Tell me.”

“I can’t tell you everything. But what I will tell you is that you can’t trust cops right now. There are some things that are going on that you should be aware of and I don’t want you to trust anyone but the family until I find out more. Can you do that for me?”

“Yea I can. What about Lela and Tami sitting at the hospital? Couldn’t they just as easy be in just as much danger? They are sitting in the hospital with the one who survived the attack.”

Lelone realized that she was right. She returned to her search to find out what else Officer McFalley looked up then she remembered that they were already there when Lucian was brought in. They knew what hospital to go to and who to look for. She quickly told Della that she would have to

call her back and to remember not to answer the door and then she quickly called her mother. She picked up on the first ring.

“Lee Lee. Where are you? I was just about to call you and tell you that—”

“Mom I can’t talk long but I need you to do something for me. Talk with the staff and tell them to immediately move Lucian to another room and place him under an alias. I think that whoever did this will eventually come back to finish the job and I don’t want to make it easy for them. Also mom, don’t talk to any cops. Not one.”

“Lelone what’s going on? Why shouldn’t I talk with the cops? They would be the ones to help solve what happened to Lucian and LJ.”

“Mom! I need you to trust me on this please. The cops don’t know anything about what happened to Lucian and LJ. They didn’t even know they were attacked. That’s why me and Luke are trying to figure out what’s going on. There are no records of anything that happened last night on the police database so if they come and ask you anything there is no reason they should know. Do you understand what I’m trying to say to you?”

“I hope you’re not saying what I think you’re saying.”

“I am Mom. Please listen to me. I’m trying to keep you guys safe while you’re there. Talk with the staff right now and tell them they need to move him urgently.”

“Okay I will do that now. The nurse just came into the room to take his vitals and see if there’s been any change in his condition and if he’s possibly waking up.”

“Okay I’ll... Wait what do you mean see if he’s waking up?”

“Lucian started moving his eyes and hands so I called the nurse in here to see what’s going on with him. If what you say is true and I believe it is, then him waking up could mean that he’s in even more danger.”

“Exactly.”

She listened as her mother talked to the nurse and the doctor as they entered the room. They didn’t know what to make of what she was telling them to do, but due to the nature of Lucian’s attack and how he was brought into the hospital they didn’t think it was that outlandish of an idea because they didn’t give her much trouble at all.

“Lee Lee. I told them. They are moving him right now. Do you remember the name that your brother and LJ used to call themselves?”

“Yes.”

“Good, he’s using that name again. I don’t want to say it aloud to you but you know the name to ask for.”

“I do. I’ll let Luke know as well. I told Della to sit at home until I get there. I think that once Luke comes to get Lela you should leave with them and stay at their house until everything is taken care of.”

“You’re still not going to tell me what you saw? I know that you know who did this. Tell me who I’m supposed to be looking out for.”

“I just did.” That was the last thing she said before she hung up the phone. It left Tami with a creepy feeling and her hairs standing on end. If the police are the ones responsible, then how much protection could they really have.

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Luke and Blake sat in the Chief’s office watching him process all that they had just told him. Chief Mitchell knew them both very well and he knew that if they were bringing him this information it wasn’t BS. They were the

best on the force and they were very well respected. He was one of the few men who had the pleasure of knowing them both on and off the force. And hearing the news about Lucian and LJ was just as big a shock to him as it had been for everyone else. Those boys were like nephews to him. He watched them grow up. He was the one who threw Luke his adoption celebration party when they found out that the papers had been finalized.

This news was heartbreaking for the Chief, and then to also hear that there were dirty cops that could be involved made it even worse. He had never had to deal with dirty cops on the force before. And now that he was faced with this information he didn't really know how to process it. He knew that he would have to take it to the head of the Internal Affairs department and find out if there had been anything suspicious going on that he was unaware of.

They would get to the bottom of this, because they had a code among them all and that was that they would protect each other while they upheld the honor to protect and serve. He would not allow a murderer to stand behind that honor and try to use it to his advantage. As part of the police force they did their job so that their family could be safer and they would be doing an injustice if they allowed the murderers to get away with what they'd done. He immediately made the call to the head of Internal Affairs Jaxon Banks, and was told that he would begin an investigation immediately and would get back with them with what he found out.

What he didn't know was that by the time they found out who it was and what was going on it would be too late.

Lelone printed out her findings and cleared the search history before getting up from the computer. She had gotten all she needed to finish what she had set out to do. She knew that the officers were moving fast to cover their tracks and they thought no one knew that they were involved. They had no idea that they were being hunted when they thought there was no need to hide.



## Chapter 8

### Swift Repercussions

Lelone put her dark glasses on as she exited the office. She didn't want to bring any attention to herself. She didn't want to give anyone anything to remember about her. Though it wasn't like it really mattered. They would see her again when this was all over but for now, she didn't want to give anyone anything to remember, anything that could accidentally warn her prey of how close she was and how much she really knew. The surprise is the best part and she didn't want that ruined. She took time to walk over to the side of the police station to where the officers' desks were, just so she could see who else they could be close to and if she should look at anyone else.

She walked in and instantly saw Officer McFalley and Officer McKinney tucked into a corner passing papers back and forth. She walked past slowly and listened in on their conversation. She overheard them talking about putting a car in impound and someone named Briggs who was suspicious about why there was no paperwork for it.

"I went and had my cousin take the car to the impound lot. Briggs was real suspicious about why he was bringing it in and why he could produce no paperwork. I don't think he's going to stay quiet for long," said Officer McKinney.

"That's the least of our problems. You were right. The dead one does know Detective Farmouth. I'm just not exactly sure how. I was able to pull

personal records for the dead one and the one in the hospital. I know where they live and work and that the dead one recently had twin girls. We'll be able to use this to our advantage. I also got the Detective's information, just in case we need to pay him a visit and find out just how close they were. We might have to do that sooner rather than later. I want to know what I'm dealing with so we can figure out how to move forward from here. Briggs will be fine. Just remind him that if he tells anything he will be in violation as well. He knows that he's not supposed to take that car without the proper paperwork."

McKinney smiled at his friend. "Yea, you're right. I'm overthinking this. We're good. No one even knows what happened to them so they have no reason to start asking questions or to even think to look for the car. That car could have been just sitting on the side of the road and I had it towed as a parking violation. You're right man. I'm thinking way too much. I'm going to go ahead and head home. I told Suzan that she better have my dinner ready for me this time. I swear that woman gets lazier as the years pass."

McFalley chuckled, "That's because you haven't given your wife the lesson yet."

A confused expression crossed McKinney's face. "I don't follow."

Nodding, McFalley said, "The obedience checks. I let my wife know immediately after we got married who the boss is and that she belonged to me. First, I moved her away from her family so that they wouldn't be able to quickly get involved in our affairs. Then, I gave her the obedience lesson.

I told her one time how things would go and when she did otherwise, I beat her good. I don't mean just physically but sexually too. She thought that she was going to have the time of her life when I tied her to the bed, but she quickly found out that I wouldn't tolerate any BS from her. She was sore for days. But I never have to speak to her about what I want more than once. That woman is like a well-trained dog. She knows exactly what to do to keep her master happy."

McKinney's eyes widened in amazement. "Does that really work? I mean I know a few buddies of mine who have the same set up as you and their wives seem to jump the moment they speak their names. Is that how you get them to do what you want, when you want?"

"Absolutely man."

"Does that include everything including sex?"

"What do you mean? You mean your wife is not only lazy but she's not satisfying you either?"

"Yea man. She's always too tired and in too much pain. I understand she's pregnant and all but that's not a real excuse to me. I mean how hard can it be to carry a child?"

"Man I hear you. But that's your fault that you allow her to play you like that. You're her husband and the Bible says that she is supposed to serve you and that you are now one. That means she's obligated to say yes. In

fact, you don't have to ask her permission to get what you want from her. How would she look coming in here to talk to your colleagues and telling them that you raped her? Sounds a bit ridiculous don't you think?"

"Yeah you're right. I just don't want to jeopardize her losing the baby. We've been trying so long to have one."

"Yea. But that would be her fault. If she was putting out, then you wouldn't have to take it. Therefore, if she does lose the baby, that would be another reason for her to get punished. There are plenty of women who are pregnant and they please their men. Hell most of these tramps out here doing more than the normal to please a man that's not even theirs. These women of ours are no

different. I was always taught that women are only good for a few things and all of those things include pleasing us men."

Hearing this conversation made Lelone's stomach turn. Not only were these assholes murderers but they also had no respect for the women that shared their name. As she walked by she made a mental note to make sure she talked to their wives before doing the job. She wanted to look into the eyes of their other victims and let them know that all this would be over soon. She didn't want them to be around when she made her move.

She made her way to her truck and waited on Officer McKinney to walk out to his car. She followed him home and parked a short way away, walking

the rest of the way to the house. She played it off like she had been jogging the nearby trails. She stopped a short distance away and looked around before making her way up the sidewalk toward the house. She could see that she could access the backyard by going through the woods that were located close to the trail. She wanted to see if he was just as much of a monster as his cowardly partner and if he would try the breaking technique on his pregnant wife.

She watched him go through the garage and immediately heard him call her name. She quickly made her way around the trail so she could get closer to the house. It was closer to evening and the darkening sky would make a small cover for her while she stood in the brush. It would be dark soon and then she would have all the coverage she needed, until then she had to play it safe. She made her way to the back of the house and heard him yelling at her about the meal that she cooked. Apparently she cooked but it wasn't what he had a taste for and he was pissed because she was supposed to know what he was expecting her to make him.

"What the hell is wrong with you? Why is it so hard for you to be the wife you're supposed to be?" Officer McKinney yelled while pacing back and forth through the kitchen.

"I don't understand what you mean Steven. I made dinner and it's ready like you asked."

“You really think I want to eat bird food? What the hell are Cornish hens going to do for me? I’m a man Suzan. I don’t like bird food! I want meat, real meat. Why is it that you always seem to make what you want to eat instead of thinking of your husband’s needs?”

“I don’t know what’s wrong with you. I did think of you. You know I can’t take the smell of any kind of meat right now. I don’t know what you want from me. I’m doing everything you ask of me and all I ask of you is to have a little understanding about how I’m feeling. The doctor says—”

Before she could continue he raised his fist and struck her across her face. “I’ve had enough of your excuses Suzan. I don’t need to understand anything other than you’re lazy and you’re using this pregnancy as an excuse to not do what I ask you to. Now you’re talking back to me instead of trying to fix the problem. My friends were right. You’re spoiled and I need to teach you a lesson. I’m not going to listen to your whining any longer. You’re going to start doing your part as a wife. And since you didn’t get the food right we’ll start with you pleasing me.”

Out of nowhere he grabbed her and roughly bent her over the counter while snatching off her underwear.

“Stop Steven! Stop you’ll hurt the baby,” she cried while trying to push him off of her.

Again he struck her; this time in the side of her head, causing her to pass out from the impact. He picked her up placing her on the large island in the center of the kitchen and entered her. She awakened a while later while he was still thrusting into her roughly and began to cry. He stopped after he was done and pulled away from her showing the blood that was now seeping from her.

“Oh my God, Steven! The baby! I could be losing the baby!” “You better hope for your sake you’re not. Look what I had to resort to doing because you couldn’t do as you were told. Hurry up and go wash this blood off of you so that you can go to the hospital.”

She slid off the counter barely able to stand and walked to the shower. Lelone watched Officer McKinney change his clothes and call the ambulance. She watched as Suzan held her stomach protectively and cried about her baby as the EMT’s lifted her into the ambulance. She watched him get into his car as the ambulance pulled off. While watching him she began to get more enraged and slightly impatient. Tonight was going to be the night that all Suzan’s troubles would be over.

She followed McKinney to Hillside Hospital and made her way to the labor and delivery floor. She snuck and put on some scrubs so she would be able to get close without him realizing that she wasn’t supposed to be there. When she walked to the waiting room she could hear the doctor asking him what happened that made her bleed and what happened to her face. She used this opportunity to go in to talk to Suzan.

“Hello Mrs. McKinney. I’m Clare. I’m going to assist you in changing into your gown okay. I know you’re in a lot of pain and this may be hard for you. Can you tell me what exactly happened today that brought you in?”

The minute she touched Suzan she saw a flash of what happened. She also saw the many times before that he had put his hands on her. She pulled away remembering the conversation he had with Officer McFalley earlier and the fake expression that he gave as if he had never hit his wife.

She looked at Suzan sympathetically and said, “We can’t help you if you don’t tell us what happened. If you keep letting him hit you, he will one day take it too far and kill you. We will do everything we can to help your baby, but you need to love you and your baby enough to protect him as well. If he does this while you’re carrying his child what do you think he will do when your baby is in your arms?”

Suzan nodded in understanding and headed into the bathroom. Lelone used that as her moment to exit. She had gotten all that she needed from her and she would use what she knew to let the hospital know that Suzan needed protection. She took off the scrubs and went to the nurse assigned to Suzan’s room and told her that she was a friend of Suzan’s and that she needed protection from her husband. The nurse nodded in understanding and went to speak with Suzan personally while telling the nurse aide to alert the doctor on what they had learned. They interrupted the doctor and pulled him aside to tell him what was going on and then they had Officer McKinney escorted off the floor. He left the hospital abruptly without making too much of a fuss. Lelone followed him home and making sure she was ready to put the first part of her plan into action.

Exiting the car, Officer McKinney immediately noticed Lelone stretching close to his driveway. When she stood straight and looked at him he was



drawn in by her icy blue eyes. She looked like she would be great relief after all that happened at the hospital so he approached her.

“Hey there little lady you look lost.”

Lelone pretended to be startled as if she was too occupied to realize that he had been watching her that entire time. “Oh. You scared me. No, I was just stretching before I continued my nightly run.”

“I don’t think a young woman like you should be running out here so late at night by yourself. Do you have anyone running with you?”

“No just me. Did you want to run with me and make sure nothing happens to me?”

“Sure. Why not?” Grateful that he had changed into sweats and sneakers before heading to the hospital, Officer McKinney accepted Lelone’s offer.

They jogged quickly down the street and headed toward the trail. He didn’t pause to consider whether this was a good idea or not because he had plans of his own. He looked up at the full moon that lit the path and up at the young woman jogging in front of him. He watched the way her body moved so fluidly without seeming to strain. Then as they got deeper into the

wooded path Lelone cut away from the path toward the flowing river in the middle of the woods. Again he followed unsuspectingly.

For a moment he lost her until he saw her stretching her shapely legs against a tree that seemed a little close to the running river.

“That tree is a little close isn’t it?”

Shaking her head she replied, “No, I don’t think so.” Then she began to take off her t shirt and shorts leaving nothing on but her panties and sports bra and she slowly entered the creek. Steven stood there watching her in aroused amazement.

Laughing she said, “Aren’t you going to join me? I thought you were making sure that I didn’t get hurt while I was out tonight.”

He didn’t stop to think about it as he began to snatch his clothes off and entered the water with her. She continued to laugh at his eagerness and splashed him playfully as he entered the water.

“I can see you didn’t need much convincing,” she laughed. “I love taking late swims in this river, that way no one can see me if I decide to take off more clothes. I don’t need anyone to get the wrong idea, you know what I mean.”

He nodded his head without responding and she quickly ducked and disappeared in the water. He briefly swam around looking for her before she popped up deeper in the river where the current was much stronger. He struggled to swim over to her and then she disappeared under the water again.

He laughed nervously at her little game until he felt a sharp stabbing pain in his groin area. She popped up out of the water smiling him. “Why don’t you come under water with me?”

He told her the pain he was having and she looked at him seductively while asking, “Do you want me to take a look?”

He nodded his head as his eyes closed in arousal as she caressed him slowly. She ducked her head under water for the last time and dragged him under by attaching weighted ropes at his waist. She stabbed him making him struggle for air while trying to fight off her attacks. He quickly began to lose blood while asking why and trying to scream for help.

She smiled evilly. “Next time be careful who you kill. You never know who you’ll have to deal with. Oh that’s right there won’t be a next time. You’ll pay for his death with your own.”

The attack was swift. She got out of the water taking the ropes with her. She dropped the knife that she got from his house on the way to the bank. When they found him they would assume that he died of self-inflicted wounds after what he did to his wife. They would have no reason to suspect anything else. This was exactly what she wanted.

## Chapter 9

### Sweeter Payback

By the time Detective Luke Farmouth returned to the hospital he was exhausted. He'd spent majority of his time trying to find out more information on the two police officers that took his son to the morgue. From the long hours of digging he found that his son's car was sitting at the police impound lot and that Officer McKinney had brought it in, saying that it had been abandoned. He rubbed his hands through his hair and walked toward the elevator just before he got on he got a call on his cell phone.

He looked at the caller ID and saw that it was Dr. Ross, the medical examiner from the morgue. Heather had called him and told him what was going on and he'd come back earlier than expected. He'd briefly taken a look at LJ and found something that he wanted to bring to Luke's attention.

Luke exited the elevator and went to the morgue. He passed by a dark haired man in sweats standing by reception and went directly to Dr. Ross. When he got there Dr. Ross said, "Hello Detective. It's been a while since I've seen you. I'm sorry we had to meet under these circumstances. I extend my condolences. I took a look at the body the moment I got into town. I wanted to make this my first priority especially in this particular case where there are people trying to make sure that I don't look too closely. From what Heather told me, the people responsible are supposed to be on the force as well. Which is another reason why I called you here. I wanted to let you know what I found before I sent this information over to the Chief."

Detective Farmouth's brows grew together as he listened to what Dr. Ross was telling him. This was a doctor that worked very closely with the bureau. So if there was something that piqued his curiosity enough to make him want to speak to the Chief himself then it was serious and it was something that would make this particular situation even harder on him.

"What is it Doc? What did you find that made you want to take a closer look and contact the chief directly?" Luke questioned urgently. "I've known and worked with you a long time and you only do that when it's something that could be valuable to the case. What did my son's body tell you that he couldn't tell me?"

Dr. Ross rubbed his brow before placing a fresh pair of gloves on his hands. "Well, let me show you."

He walked over to the autopsy table where LJ lay and called Heather into the room. When she got there he told her in a very hushed voice, "Heather, make sure that we're not disturbed please. This is something that I want to make sure is kept as private as possible. In fact, I want you to close and lock the doors and come assist me.

She nodded her head while holding this odd expression on her face as if she wanted to say something she just didn't want to say it out loud. Dr. Ross noticed her hesitation and followed by saying a little louder, "Heather. I'm going to walk Detective Farmouth over to security then I'm going to lunch. Lock up the morgue until I get back. I don't want to be disturbed."

She quickly nodded and walked back to the front to let the hooded guest know that he would have to wait until after lunch to have Dr. Ross sign off on the body that he was waiting for. They heard him mumble something slightly obscene before saying that he would sit and wait since no one seemed to have a sense of time.

She mumbled her apologies before quickly coming back into the morgue and bolt locking the door as instructed. It was only then that she explained why she looked as she had before.

“Sorry Dr. Ross, Detective. The guy that has been waiting is one of the officers that brought the body in and told me that I needed to make sure that Dr. Ross wouldn’t touch it.”

Dr. Ross nodded his head. “I figured that was him when I overheard him asking about the body being transferred.” He turned his attention to Luke. “That is why I called you so urgently.”

But Luke wasn’t fully focused, all he could think about was that one of the officers that killed his son was currently standing outside and didn’t seem to recognize him enough to hide his intention. Which told him that he didn’t know him first hand and it also made him want to go out and confront him face to face.

Dr. Ross noticed how tense he was and said, “Detective. I know you may want to go see who he is but you might want to hear this before you do, that may give you a clearer understanding of what you’re dealing with.”

This made Luke pause and fight to give Dr. Ross his full attention. Glancing at him Dr. Ross continued, “I’ve worked with you and your department on many cases before. What I found in this case made me take pause because I found identifiable bullets in your son as well as fingerprints.”

Now giving Dr. Ross his full attention he responded. “What do you mean identifiable bullets?”

“Well I know the force has had markings on their bullets for quite a while. This information isn’t given to the public so no outsider would know enough about them to be able to duplicate

those markings. So that tells me that someone on the force is responsible for the death of Lucas Jr.”

“Where did you find the bullets?”

“I found one lodged in his skull and pieces of the other bullet in his chest. There was also one lodged in his spine. However, that one had a different



angle of entry than the other two. The others entered from the front and this one entered from behind.”

“Do you have the bullets?”

“I figured you would ask that.”

Dr. Ross picked up the petri dish holding the bullets and handed him some gloves. “Here put these on. I don’t want you to touch these.”

Luke slowly placed the gloves on and took the petri dish from Dr. Ross. He picked up the bullets and there in his hand was the physical evidence that he was dreading to see. The proof that someone he worked with to remove crime from the streets was using his position to hide his own crime.

Dr. Ross continued, “From the evidence found it’s not a surprise that they didn’t want me to examine the body. Another coroner who’s not used to working with you guys wouldn’t know what the markings were. From the look of the body he was killed around seven yesterday afternoon.” Looking at Heather he said, “You say he was brought in around twelve last night?” She nodded her head. He looked back to Detective Farmouth whose eyes were small intense slits. “Detective have you spoken to the Chief about your suspicions?”

“Yes we spoke right before I came here. We are trying to find the cops that brought him here.”

“Okay good. At least we know that this will get handled, Chief McCoy has always been a straight shooter.”

“Yea he has. But I’m also not really sure how he’s going to handle this. He believes in the pledge to protect and serve as well as the brotherhood of the force.”

“It shouldn’t be a hard choice to make. This is a breach of both. Why would you think that he wouldn’t do right by you, especially when he’s known you and your son for years? This is something that affects the entire police department.”

Shaking his head he said, “I don’t know. I’m just not sure how he’s going to handle this especially when we don’t know who it is or what happened.”

“What do you want me to do?”

“Go ahead and make the call, but keep records of everything for me just in case.”

Dr. Ross nodded, “Okay I’ll do that. I hope things go as they should. Your boy was a good kid. He didn’t deserve anything like this. This was an execution style killing. They wanted to make sure he was dead. He was in no way shot in self-defense, especially when he was shot from behind. I sure hope you find out who did this. If they are able to get away with this, this will open up a can of worms that will be impossible to close. I don’t think anyone wants to deal with the backlash from Pandora’s Box.”

Detective Farmouth stood there thinking about all the possibilities. Dr. Ross was right. There were a lot of things that could happen. He could only hope that things would go as they should. That way he wouldn’t have to allow his anger to surface and

take over. Because once something like that is released it’s hard to try to put it back into its closed box.

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Lelone pulled into Della and LJ’s driveway and used her key to enter the house. She had called Della to let her know that she was on her way there to drop off her bags and bring her what she needed from the store. When she entered the house, she immediately noticed how eerily quiet it was.

She found Della in the girls' room sitting close to their cribs watching them sleep. It looked as if she'd been there for hours.

“Della. You Okay?”

She nodded her head and slowly turned around to face her. With her eyes red and swollen and tears rolling down her face she said, “I can't believe he's gone. He was just here with me.”

Lelone stood quietly in the doorway, because she didn't know how to respond when she was feeling the exact same way. Della continued, “This is my fault you know.”

Confused at what she meant Lelone's face scrunched up. “What do you mean?”

“I'm the one who told them to leave the house. LJ has been wonderful with the girls. He had done nothing but go to work and come straight home to help me. I just thought that he deserved to get out the house with his best friend and go relieve some stress. I was also trying to get him out of my way. I was planning a surprise for him which I finished last night while waiting on him to return.”

She got out of her chair and led the way to the kitchen and pulled out the small cake with blue and pink fondant on it.

“I went to the doctor yesterday morning for my six-week checkup and it seems that I’m expecting another set of twins. I was going to tell him when he got home last night but he never returned and he never will. I don’t know what I’m going to do without him. He was not just the father of my children but he was also the love of my life. I can’t imagine life without him.”

Della began to weep again. Lelone could see why she was feeling that way. She was getting ready to have four children under the age of two by herself. On top of that she was going to have to bury the love of her life.

“Della go ahead and lay down. I’m going to take care of the girls for you while I’m here. You should get some sleep.”

She nodded and headed to her room without making any sort of fuss.

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Officer McFalley sat outside of the morgue for over an hour before he realized what was going on. They were discussing what happened to the boy. He would have to think of something quickly to give them something more to think about. He was going to have to go and take care of the boy’s

family. He would need his partner to cover for him while he got the job done so they wouldn't be considered suspects.

He immediately called Officer McKinney, when he didn't answer he called his house phone to speak with his wife. When there was no answer there either he decided to take matters into his own hands. From the information that he pulled up on Detective Farmouth's computer he knew where they stayed and that his wife would be at home by herself with their children. He would go and take care of them and make it look like an intruder broke in and killed them all. Once they put the pieces together they would think it was the same person who killed the husband.

Pulling up at the house he saw that she was home because there was a car in the driveway. He placed his badge in his hand, walked to the door and rang the doorbell. It wasn't Della who opened the door; but Lelone. "Hello Officer. How can I help you?"

"Hello. I'm Officer Johnson," he lied. "I have been going by each of your neighbors' houses to let them know there is a dangerous suspect on the loose. I'm providing each of your information on how to deal with this particular situation. Can I come in?"

"Um that may be a bit of a problem. My little ones are sleeping and I don't want to take the chance of waking them up. Give me a few and I'll step outside." Lelone said as she tried to close the door.

He put his hand up to stop her from closing the door. “I don’t think that’s going to be safe miss. Just let me come in and speak with you and then I’ll be on my way. I promise not to talk too loud.”

“Okay... well let me at least put on something decent before I let you in.”

He didn’t want to push the issue too much so he agreed. Lelone closed the door and went into the room where Della

lay sleeping. She placed the babies in the room with her. As she began to exit the room Della stirred. “What’s going on Lee Lee? Why did you put the babies in here with me?”

“There is an officer at the door, but he’s not wearing a uniform and he’s asking to come in here to speak with you. I told

him that I was you so that I could get down to the real reason why he’s here.”

“Is that the officer you wanted me to look out for?”

Not wanting her to get spooked she said, “I’m not sure. Just stay in here and try to keep the little ones quiet. If you hear anything that sounds suspicious call Luke, don’t call the police. As a matter of fact, call him now.”

Just then they heard the glass break. It sounded like it came from the kitchen. Frightened Della immediately grabbed her phone and called Luke. Closing the door, Lelone said one last thing, “No matter what you hear don’t open this door.”

Frightened and confused Della sat on the bed grasping the phone. Completely unaware of what was about to happen just outside of her bedroom door.

Lelone didn’t have time to come up with a plan. She only had enough time to do one thing, shutting off all the lights. A few months before the babies were born she had helped LJ set up cameras as well as the ability to turn all the lights in the house on and off with one controller. This came in handy when she would need the cover of the darkness but didn’t have time to turn off all the lights one by one. After turning off the lights and quickly glancing outside she noticed that there was a dark car that was conveniently parked too far back to be able to see the full car. It was as if the person who parked it wanted their car to be hard to notice. In fact, if she wasn’t aware that there should be a car outside, she wouldn’t have even seen it.

Hearing him walk through the house, she quickly crouched down positioning herself against to the wall. She had already grabbed all she was going to need from her bag and had those items strategically placed on her body in easy reach.

Officer McFalley had placed his gloves on and walked to the back of the house. What better way to make it look like a break it than to actually break in? He hadn’t seen any signs of an alarm system so he wouldn’t need to worry about cops coming and finding him here finishing the job. Taking his gun in his hand he smashed the sliding door window. And as he was breaking the glass around it for a cleaner entry all the lights went off. He was curious but he didn’t let that stop him from proceeding into the house.



Lee Lee caught a glimpse of the steel gun as he came through the patio door. She immediately went back to the room and told Dell to take the babies out of the carriages and lay them on the floor next to her. Della didn't ask why she just did as she was told. Lee Lee quietly closed the door behind her and began her walk through the house.

Though the house was old and the creaky floors would usually give away everyone's position as it was doing with Officer McFalley. But her childhood experience taught her to be silent on any type of surface, so she moved effortlessly through the house right to where Officer McFalley stood holding a steel gun fully equipped with a silencer that he would never get to use.

Without him realizing she was standing near him, Lelone used her small compact hunting knife and slashed through the arm that was holding the gun with movements as fast as lightening and as quiet as a stalking cat, while whispering, "You should have never come here."

He immediately dropped the gun and spun around. Even though his eyes had adjusted to the darkness he saw nothing there. As he began reaching for the gun with his good arm she slashed through that arm as well as easily as if she was slicing through butter.

She whispered, "You're going to die here."

He screamed out in agony as he pulled his gaping arm away from the gun. He tried to run outside only to find that the backyard was also pitch black. He attempted to open the gate to head back to his car but he found that it was zip tied closed and he couldn't get through, so he headed toward the only place he could, the woods.

Lelone was following quietly close at his heels. She was so close to him that she could hear his pained breathing as he made his way through the unknown forest, the last thing he would be able to see before his fate was sealed.

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Della saw Officer McFalley leave the house and used that time to again try to call Detective Farmouth, again his phone went straight to voicemail. She assumed his was at the hospital and was simply out of service right now. She would send him an urgent text that he would get as soon as his service returned. What she didn't know was that she really didn't need him and when he did arrive it would already be too late.

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Officer McFalley tripped and fell while making his way deeper into the woods. Lelone knew that he would, she was counting on the fact that he wouldn't be able to find his way through the woods. She also knew that they weren't alone and the animals would soon smell his blood and come

running to finish the meal. By the time they found him there would be nothing left. As he continued to walk she kept whispering his fate in his ear. She wanted to spook him enough so his fear would cloud the rest of his senses. As he grew closer to the river that flowed through the woods she grew tired of playing with him and fully showed herself to him. When she stepped in front of him to show her face it was as if the moon was her personal spotlight. The first thing he noticed was her cold blue eyes.

“I’ve seen those eyes before. You know Detective Farmouth.” “I’m glad you finally recognize me.”

“But you should know that I’m a cop and you won’t get away with this.”

Smiling her evil smile she replied, “Oh, on the contrary. I will. I know exactly who you are. You are one of the men that killed my God brother, Luke Farmouth, Jr., the only son of Detective Luke Farmouth, Sr. and attempted to kill my brother, Lucian, who is fighting for his life in ICU.”

His eyes widened. “Yea so you see; this is just karma you’re getting from taking an innocent man away from him family and placing another in the ICU. You’re lucky I didn’t go visit your wife, Barbara, and let you know what loss feels like before I slit your throat. But that won’t be necessary, you have given her enough grief over the years and I’m pretty sure I’m doing her a favor. You should have simply done your job and left my brother alone.”

With those final words she used her samurai sword and with one quick slice she separated his bottom half from his upper half and. Then she took a

black phone from her pocket and made a call. Within minutes his remains were picked up and completely disposed of. No one would ever know that he was killed there and when they did find him, they would have a hard time identifying his body.

She walked back into the house and placed her bloody clothes and gloves she used to kill both men in plastic bags. She put the bags in the burning pot that she brought along with her and set the items on fire. While standing there in nothing but her under clothes she watched them burn. She then walked in the house and placed her knives on the counter and got in the shower to wash off the blood.

As she stood there and let the blood run down her body Della knocked on the door and asked her what happened. She stepped out of the shower and wrapped a towel around her body before opening the door and replied, “Della. I love you. But don’t ask me that. All you need to know is that the people responsible for killing LJ are now dealing with their fate in Hell.”

Della stood there in shock. Lelone hugged her then walked passed her to grab her things. While she cleaned them off she asked, “Did you ever get in touch with Luke?”

Placing the babies in their swings she replied, “No. the phone kept going to voicemail.” Lelone nodded. “He must be at the hospital with Lucian. What message did you send him?”

“I told him that someone had broken into the house.” She nodded and said nothing.

Looking outside on her deck at the pot that was ablaze but wasn’t catching fire Della asked, “What’s in the pot? Won’t that catch fire? That flame seems to be getting out of control.”

“It only looks out of control. In fact, quite the opposite is happening. It’s handling things that other fires wouldn’t be able to without letting the backdraft get out of control. I make sure my fires are a lot like me. Dangerously controlled.”

They sat there in silence.

When Luke finally got the message he dropped Tami and Lela off at his house and came rushing over, only to find them sitting on

the couch. Della had drifted off to sleep and Lee Lee was sitting next to her watching a movie and eating popcorn.

“What happened?” he said rushing into the house with his gun drawn.

She shrugged her shoulders and replied, “I had a problem and I handled it.” Then she turned back to her movie.

Luke placed his gun back in its holster. “What’s that pot out there sitting on the patio?”

“Something I still have to dispose of.”

She got up and walked out to the pot that had long ago died out and picked up the pot to look at the dust-like remains. Then she took the pot and flushed all that dust down the toilet.

Luke walked behind her following her closely and finally asked, “What happened to the intruder?”

She looked up at him, “He got what he deserved.” Smiling slightly she continued, “Sometimes karma lets other people do her job, especially when she thinks they’ll have more fun than she will.”

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The next day Luke was called into the Chiefs' office to receive some odd news. "Hey Farmouth, I wanted to tell you in person. I spoke with Dr. Ross about his findings. I was also able to find out who took your son to the hospital. It was Officers' McFalley and McKinney. However, I was unable to confront them about what we've found. McKinney was found dead in the woods behind his house. It looks like he committed suicide after he beat and raped his pregnant wife. McFalley was found chopped to pieces in a steel mill. It looks like he tripped and fell into their open saw pit. From the looks of the evidence that we have put together on the case involving the death of LJ, they were responsible but it seems karma had her way with them before we could get to them."

Detective Farmouth said nothing as he listened to what the Chief said. All he could do was remember what Lelone said, "Sometimes karma lets other people do her job for her."

He wasn't going to bother telling the Chief that he knew first hand who karma was because they had already looked at the evidence and the Coroner had already ruled the deaths a horrible accident and a suicide. He still had to worry about the burial of his son.

As he was walking out the office he got a call, "Hey Dad."

"Hey Della. What's going on? Is there something going on with you or the babies?"

“Well yea sort of. But I didn’t call to talk about that. I called to let you know that Lucian is awake and is doing perfectly fine.”

Smiling at the news he quickly changed his face to concern while asking, “What’s wrong with you?”

With a mixture of happy and loss going through her she replied, “Well I think it’s as good a time as any to tell you that I’m expecting again. Not only that but I’m having twins.”

This brought a bigger smile to his lips even though his heart was still heavy with the loss of a son that will never see his children born. He rushed out the door and headed straight to the hospital. Sitting there in the room was everyone who was the most important to him. He looked around the room and his eyes rested on Lucian and then on Della and the babies, then he looked over at Leone who stood next to the door. In that moment he couldn’t be more relieved

with how she handled the situation. Here was this petite beauty who took it upon herself to deal with the enemy without ever alarming anyone about who the enemy was. Making them all safer but also sending a warning to anyone else who would be dumb enough to try it.

Be careful who you make your enemy. You never know you else you have to deal with in the process.